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UNPROFOR
COMMUNICATIONS
collector
'95 JUL 10 21:35

MOST IMMEDIATE

Page 1 Of 3

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FROM: AKASHI, UNPF-HQ, ZAGREB
NUMBER: UNPROFOR Z- 1128
DATE: 10 JULY 1995
SUBJECT: SITUATION IN SREBRINICA

UNPROFOR
COMMUNICATIONS
'95 JUL 10 21:46
FOT

for - Jamie
FC

1. The purpose of this message is to keep you informed of developments in Srebrinica as they happen. The message is meant to complement other communications on this subject to your office on the same subject, such as my "Daily Reporting" message of today, and the telecon between Mr. Annan and Mr. Almstrom from my office.

2. Of primary concern is the shelling of the town of Srebrinica, and the resultant civilian casualties. Although the situation at present prevents any accurate casualty counts or even estimates, UNHCR reported that six civilians were killed and 23 wounded in Srebrinica town as at 13:00 (all times local) today. This figure is likely to rise, as heavy shelling continued intermittently throughout the day, and as there was a stream of refugees fleeing outlying villages into the town. UNHCR reported that about two thousand people had gathered in the vicinity of the hospital, looking for some protection because of the special status of a hospital. UNMO reports however claim that at least two heavy rounds, presumed 155 mm, impacted near the hospital, shattering its windows. Subsequently, an unknown but large number of people started to flee Srebrinica town to the north, in the direction of Potocari, where another UNPROFOR (Dutchbat) base is located. As of 18:00 there were reports of BSA infantry attacking the southern perimeter of Srebrinica town in the general vicinity of the Dutchbat blocking position. The Dutch soldiers manning the position fired back over the heads of the advancing BSA. Later, as the advance continued, the Dutch engaged in direct fire fights with the BSA, using personal weapons and .50 calibre machine guns. Two BSA tanks have been heard

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CZV 1115 2/3

R0081677

operating behind the BSA infantry lines, and there is concern that these tanks may advance to engage the blocking position. During the evening hours, we received reports that the Bosnian army has set up defensive positions near to the Dutch blocking position, presumably in an effort to stop the BSA advance. Reports now (23:00) state that the BSA advance has indeed stopped. Other reports state that the Dutchbat OP on the western boundary of the pocket is surrounded by the BSA, and may have been directly targeted. The only UN casualty report so far is the Dutch soldier who died on 8 July.

3. The Dutchbat Commanding Officer and the BSA Commanding Officer met in the south of the enclave, at which meeting the BSA officer offered a cease-fire to allow: 1) the withdrawal of NGO workers from Srebrinica, who should gather tomorrow a.m. south of the town; 2) the withdrawal of Dutchbat forces without their weapons or equipment, as of tomorrow; 3) the departure from Srebrinica within 48 hours of all those Muslims who wished to leave for Tuzla. This offer is considered unacceptable by UNPF.

4. Serious consideration was given to the possible use of close air support in Srebrinica. The Force Commander made the decision not to use CAS under the present circumstances because the fighting was by infantry, thus making means other than air power preferable in UNPROFOR's efforts to stop the BSA advance. However, the use of CAS is still possible at any time if the BSA uses its tanks or artillery against UNPROFOR troops in the enclave. As of 06:00 tomorrow NATO aircraft will be airborne and ready to conduct a CAS mission at shorter notice, and against infantry if necessary, if called upon to do so.

5. The SRSG was in Dubrovnik today at the long-standing invitation of the Croatian government. He was alerted to the deterioration in the situation, and made the decision to return immediately. An aircraft was sent to pick him up, and he is expected in Zagreb at approximately 23:30. The Force Commander has kept the SRSG apprised of developments.

6. The Force Commander spoke to General Tolimir (close advisor to General Mladic) this evening. Tolimir stated that he had given orders to his troops to stop firing and not to attack UN troops, but that it would take some time for the orders to reach the troops on the ground. Tolimir also claimed he was unaware of the terms of any offer made by a local BSA commander to the Dutchbat CO.

7. I have instructed my representative in Belgrade, D-SRSG Iouri Miakotnykh, to contact President Milosevic's office urgently, to inform him of events on the ground, and to solicit his assistance in preventing a further deterioration. Miakotnykh has an appointment at this time with Milosevic's Chef de Cabinet.

8. There are varying assessments as to why the BSA has embarked on this military operation. One is that a renegade commander is responsible, a possibility which I consider unlikely. Another is that the BSA wants to shrink the Srebrinica pocket, as opposed to overrun it, in order to decrease the resources required to defend its lines. A third is that the BSA wish to overrun the pocket in order to completely do away with it, free up substantial military resources, expand Serb control of eastern Bosnia, and by doing so render unusable the Contact Group map as a basis for future negotiations. Yet

CZ-N 1115 3/3

R0081671

another possibility is that the BSA wish to demonstrate to UNPF/UNPROFOR, and to the TCNs, that the RRF is not a panacea for our difficulties, and does not free us from the continuing dilemma over the use of force by UNPROFOR.

9. I will keep you closely informed of the situation as it develops.

ENDALL../