

# Fresh rebel reinforcements move on Rwandan capital

Mseteka, Buchizya

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NAIROBI, April 22 (Reuter) - Rebel reinforcements advanced towards the besieged Rwandan capital and a threadbare U.N. mission hoped for a truce to end the country's slaughter.

Sporadic fighting between rebels of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) and government units continued in the morning, the commander of a scaled-down United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), Brigadier-General Romeo Dallaire, told Reuters.

"There is lots of sporadic firing going on around Kigali. It looks like the government and RPF are fighting it out," Dallaire said in a phone interview from Kigali.

Dallaire, a Canadian, said a column of fresh rebel forces had pierced the captured town of Rwamagana, about 25 miles to the east and was now advancing on Kigali.

"They are moving from Rwamagana...they are moving westwards onto Kigali," he said, adding "it would be premature at the moment to say who will take the day".

The Red Cross says tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of people have been killed in a tribal bloodbath between majority Hutus and minority Tutsis that began two weeks ago after the presidents of Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi, both Hutus, were killed in a rocket attack on their plane.

Dallaire, whose forces are to be reduced to 270 troops under a new U.N. order, said he hoped a ceasefire between the two sides could be arranged at peace talks in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha on Saturday. But he said he was unaware of who would attend from the government side.

The rebels have agreed to attend the talks to be chaired by Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi but they insist they will only talk to the Rwandan army and not members of an interim government which fled Kigali last week.

"There will be no negotiation with the interim government. This government has not respected the peace agreement, which is the basic law ruling our country today," Faustin Twagirumungu, Rwanda's prime-minister designate, said in a radio interview monitored in Nairobi.

He was referring to a peace pact brokered between the RPF and the government of the late Rwandan president, Juvenal Habyarimana, killed along with

Burundi's leader Cyprien Ntaryamira in the attack on their plane on April 6.

Dallaire said massacres had continued unabated in the southern town of Butare. "It is important that a ceasefire is worked out so that we can focus our attention on helping the people of Rwanda," he said. He said UNAMIR will now concentrate on the humanitarian aspects.

On Thursday, the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution reducing the U.N. force, once numbering 2,500, to a bare minimum of 270 military and civilian personnel.

Dallaire said up to 1,000 military personnel would be kept in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, ready to be flown back to Kigali once a ceasefire was worked out.

A U.N. emergency team is expected to fly to the capital at the weekend to assess humanitarian needs there and in outlying areas, a U.N. spokesman said.

Speaking in Geneva, the spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told Reuters that about 90,000 people have fled Rwanda for four neighbouring countries, nearly doubling the number in just two days.

The UNHCR said the new figure of 90,000 refugees included 50,000 citizens of Burundi who have returned to their homeland since killings erupted in Rwanda after Habyarimana was killed.

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