

Rwanda radio calls for murder

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WASHINGTON, May 4 (Reuter) – An American human rights activist told a House of Representatives panel Wednesday the Rwandan government has connections with a radio station she says continues to call for the murder of the Tutsi minority.

Assistant Secretary of State George Moose told the House of Representatives subcommittee on Africa the radio station had been making murderous broadcasts, but was off the air last week.

Rwandan Ambassador Aloys Uwimana denied the charges and accused the human rights activist, Alison Des Forges, of lying.

Des Forges – of Human Rights Watch/Africa in New York – said that even though the radio's stationary transmitter had been knocked off the air, it was again broadcasting from mobile units with less power.

Des Forges said the radio station is owned by Felicien Kabuga, the son-in-law of the country's president.

Uwimana at first denied any connection, but later acknowledged Kabuga "probably" owns stock in the station.

Moose told the House subcommittee on Africa the United States had been appalled by the radio station's broadcasts.

"It was inciting people to kill Tut-

sis," Moose said. He said the United States had considered jamming the station, but that was no longer necessary.

"That capability does exist, and we probably would have gone forward with (the jamming) but in the meantime we learned that the RPF (Rwanda Patriotic Front rebels) had successfully shelled" the station, he said.

Moose said the broadcasters were probably acting with some protection of Rwandan military forces, but declined to directly link the government to the broadcasts.

Moose, who acknowledged several times that U.S. government information has sometimes been spotty, said : "We know that for the last week there haven't been any broadcasts."

But after Moose left the room Des Forges testified she had telephoned Rwanda and talked to a person listening to broadcasts at 7 :30 a.m. EDT Sunday (1130 GMT).

"The station was essentially saying, 'kill Tutsis,'" she said.

Up to 200,000 people have perished in Rwanda in the past month. Witnesses and aid workers say the brunt of the campaign of mass slaughter has been aimed at the Tutsi ethnic group.

The Tutsis make up nine percent of Rwanda's 7.5 million people, according

to Rwandan government numbers.

Des Forges was accompanied by Monique Mujawamariya, a Rwandan human rights activist who escaped one step ahead of pursuers. She said through an interpreter the denial by

the ambassador made her furious.

“Everyone knows (Kabuga) operates the station,” said Mujawamariya, who said her life had been threatened numerous times before she left Rwanda.