

France blames Rwandan rebels for refugee crisis

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UNITED NATIONS, July 17 (AFP) - France blamed the Tutsi-led rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) for exacerbating the situation in Rwanda and the area around the Zairean border town of Goma.

In a letter sent Sunday to the Security Council president, French UN charge d'affaires Herve Ladsous wrote that artillery fire from the east had left about 60 dead in the region around Goma.

That artillery fire was "from Rwanda and probably at the initiative of RPF forces," he wrote.

After a new advance Sunday, the French government also again warned the RPF not to infiltrate the safe haven in southwest Rwanda controlled by French troops.

"French forces will continue to oppose, as has been said since the beginning, any entry by armed individuals whatever their origin may be," Ladsous wrote.

The situation in Rwanda was expected to be taken up by the Security Council in consultations, diplomats said.