

## Tutsis flee Masisi region for Goma: sources

AFP, September 13, 1997

KIGALI, Sept 13 (AFP) - Some 8,000 Tutsis from the Masisi region, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, have fled their villages because of mounting insecurity, informed sources said Saturday.

Lauchlan Munro, principal administrator for the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) for the area, told AFP that the Tutsis arrived two weeks ago in Goma after witnessing big troop movements.

Reached by telephone, Munro also told of major clashes having taken place in the affected area in recent weeks.

On September 5, the DR Congo human rights group AZADHO said that more than 2,000 people had been killed since July in the east of what used to be Zaire.

They died in clashes between government forces and Mai-Mai combatants from various ethnic groups.

The area is also troubled by Rwandan Hutu extremists, known as Interahamwe, and troops of the for-

mer Rwandan regime who regularly cross into northwestern Rwanda on guerrilla raids.

The poor security situation has prompted Kinshasa authorities – who deposed longtime dictator Mobutu Sese Seko earlier this year – to dispatch troop reinforcements.

One Goma resident, who asked for anonymity, noted "a phenomenal increase in the number of soldiers in town in the past month."

This was confirmed by an aid worker in Kigali, who said that 2,000 to 3,000 soldiers from Kasai province, in the centre of the DR Congo, had been sent to the area to help restore order.

This past week Rwanda and DR Congo signed a military accord dealing with their common border area. A number of observers believe the two countries are planning joint operations in the Masisi, regarded as a tinderbox for unrest.

Northwest Rwanda, particularly the Gisenyi region, have since August

been hit by several attacks by Hutu August 21 in which 148 refugees were  
militiamen, notably one against the killed.  
Mudende refugee camp for Tutsis on dla/rom/km