

US accuses security forces of killing Rwandan PM

AFP, April 7, 1994

WASHINGTON, April 7 (AFP) – The US Government accused Thursday Rwandan security forces of murdering the country’s Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana.

“I am ... horrified that elements of the Rwandan security forces have sought out and murdered Rwandan officials, including the prime minister,” said President Bill Clinton, in a statement issued by the White House.

“On behalf of the people of the United States I extend my condolences to the families of the deceased presidents and the prime minister,” added Clinton.

In New York the United Nations reported that government troops broke into a UN compound in the Rwandan capital Kigali, seized the prime minister and killed her but admitted that they were unable to confirm the report.

“We were informed that she is dead. We cannot confirm that,” UN spokesman Fred Eckhard in New York told AFP. “We did not witness it. We have just been informed.”

Three Belgian UN military observers were confirmed to have been killed in Kigali where unrest broke out following the deaths Wednesday of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi in a plane crash at the airport, UN spokesman JoeSills said earlier.

The Rwandan government said the president’s plane was shot down, but

UN personnel on the scene have not confirmed this. The plane was carrying 12 people, including President Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda and his Burundi counterpart Cyprien Ntaryamira.

Eckhard said Uliwingiyimana was at her house when she learned of the presidential plane crash and the ensuing outbreak of violent unrest.

“She feared for her life from extremist elements in the country and the military in particular,” Eckhard said.

Accompanied by a UN bodyguard, the prime minister tried to flee her house “but she was stopped by some elements of the military who disarmed her UN guard,” he said.

“But in the process of disarming him, they were disrupted and she escaped and she made it to the compound of the UN development program in Kigali,” he said.

“She took refuge there, but she was hunted down and military elements broke into the compound where we have civilians only and took her away,” he said.

He said the UN mission in Rwanda had taken the prime minister’s family under protection, as well as the prime minister designated under a transitional government provided for by peace accords signed in Arusha, Tanzania.

bur/em/dkb AFP AFP