20,000 refugees flee Rwanda slaughter

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GENEVA, April l5 (AFP) - About 20,000 people have fled from the bloodshed in Rwanda to the four neighbouring countries and the exodus was continuing, UN refugees official Sylvana Foa said here Friday.

She said staff of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees had verified that 12,000 people had gone to Burundi, 9,100 were in Zaire, several hundred in Tanzania and about l00 in Uganda.

The UNHCR was sending a first relief team later on Friday to Goma in eastern Zaire where 8,000 refugees had gathered, and a second unit would leave for Tanzania in the next few days, Foa said.

In Rwanda itself, in the southern region of Butare, 50 kilometres (30 miles) from the border with Burundi, 140,000 displaced persons were being housed in nine camps.

World Food Programme food stocks stored in Tanzania would be trucked up to northern Burundi to feed them. Current rations were enough for a week, Foa said.

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