

Belgium signals it will cut its substantial aid to Rwanda

AFP, February 11, 1993

BRUSSELS, Feb 11 (AFP) - Belgium is considering a fundamental revision of its 41-million dollar aid programme to Rwanda, Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes has told parliament here.

The minister spoke hours before a spokesman for the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) told journalists in north Rwanda that his guerrilla movement was declaring a unilateral ceasefire after three days of fighting during which the rebels advanced to within 30 kilometres (20 miles) of the capital, Kigali.

Replying to a question, Claes told parliament that Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana was "overwhelmingly responsible" for this week's revival of the civil war, which followed inter-tribal massacres in which some 300 people were reportedly killed.

Claes said the government would make a decision on its aid - which, as a member of parliament pointed

out, includes military training - after the publication of a report on human rights in the central African state.

The report, which is being drawn up by a commission of representatives of aid organisations, is expected in the near future.

Claes accused senior officials of Habyarimana's party, the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development, of trying to block the commission's investigation into recent ethnic violence.

In north Rwanda early Thursday, the RPF's Frank Mugambajye said his movement launched their offensive Monday, breaking a ceasefire agreed last August, because government supporters had massacred more than 300 Tutsi last month.

"We had to put a stop to this ethnic cleansing," he said.

The RPF, which draws its support from the minority Tutsi tribe, began its insurrection to overthrow

Habyarimana, who hails from the majority Hutu tribe, with an invasion from Uganda in 1990.

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