

Detained Rwandan official sought Tutsi killings: TV

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MONTREAL, Jan 27 (AFP) - A former top Rwandan official detained in Canada made a speech in 1992 calling for the physical liquidation of Rwanda's ethnic Tutsi minority, Canadian television reported Friday.

The French-language news channel RDI broadcast footage it said showed Leon Mugesera, former advisor to the late Rwandan president Juvenal Habyarimana, calling on the country's ethnic Hutu majority to kill Tutsis.

Mugesera was arrested Thursday in Quebec and is being investigated on international charges of crimes against humanity in connection with the bloody civil war in Rwanda last year that left some half million people dead.

Most of those killed and many of the millions of Rwandans who fled the violence were Tutsis. The war in Rwanda was sparked with the death of Habyarimana in a plane crash in

April 1994.

Mugesera arrived in Canada in August 1993 after being granted refugee status by the Canadian embassy in Madrid.

He was forced to flee Rwanda when a warrant for his arrest was issued by the Rwandan Justice Ministry after he fell in disgrace within the coalition government that preceded Habyarimana's death.

It was unclear if his political troubles within the government at home were related to his alleged appeals for the killing of Tutsis.

However a United Nations report published in December accused Mugesera of "explicitely calling on Hutus to kill Tutsis and to throw their bodies into the rivers of Rwanda."

Canadian immigration authorities said Mugesera "hid important facts" from them when he sought refugee status.

The investigation of Mugesera was expected to take at least one month and Canadian officials noted that even if he were ordered expelled from the country he would be entitled to appeal.

Leaders of the Rwandan community in Canada however voiced relief at his arrest.

"For the Rwandan community,

which consists mostly of Tutsis who fled the regime for which Mugesera was the ideologue, it is a great relief to know that he will be leaving Canada," said Jean Kamanzi, chairman of the Association of Canadians of Rwandan Origin.

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