

Kagame demands Hutu soldiers be kept from refugees, humanitarian relief

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UNITED NATIONS, Dec 15 (AFP) - Rwanda's Vice President Paul Kagame demanded Thursday that those responsible for mass killings in his country's civil war be kept away from refugees in Zaire and stopped from receiving humanitarian aid.

Kagame told reporters at UN headquarters in New York camps were full of "criminals" who are ineligible for assistance.

"There are militias and former leaders who together are responsible for the atrocities that have been carried out in the country," he said.

Hundreds of thousands of Rwandans fled to Zaire and Burundi during the bloody three-month civil war

sparked by the death of president Juvenal Habyarimana in April.

Between 500,000 and one million people, mostly ethnic Tutsis, are believed to have been killed in the conflict, mainly by Hutu militias loyal to Habyarimana's government.

Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali called last month for deploying up to 5,000 peacekeepers in the camps to ensure the safety of the refugees, who continue to be threatened by the militias.

Kagame addressed a special Security Council session on Rwanda. The council has not yet responded to the UN chiefs call for deploying peacekeepers.

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