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Central Intelligence Agency



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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

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Uganda-Rwanda: Museveni's Role in the Rebel Invasion [REDACTED]

Summary

*The invasion of Rwanda in early October by Ugandan based Tutsi exiles has generated allegations in the region and the international community that Ugandan President Museveni actively supported the rebels. Although Museveni has repeatedly denied foreknowledge of the invasion or subsequent resupply of the rebel forces, Kigali has ridiculed his claims of innocence.*

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Museveni has ordered Ugandan troops to

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seal the border with Rwanda and has supported various  
ceasefire proposals.

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### The Tutsis Invade Rwanda

About 2000 Rwandan exiles from Uganda invaded northeastern Rwanda on 1 October, threatening President Habyarimana's regime and raising the spectre of renewed ethnic violence in the region. Initial successes by the exile force--which managed to enter the Rwandan capital--prompted Belgium and France to send troops to protect their nationals and secure the airport. Zaire, which has a mutual defense agreement with Rwanda, also provided some 1200 troops to aid Rwandan forces.

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The initial invasion force of about 2000 Rwandan Tutsi deserters from the Ugandan Army was joined by other Tutsis and disaffected Hutus, bringing the exiles' strength to some 4000. The rebel forces soon declared themselves as the military wing of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a banned dissident group particularly active among Tutsi refugees in Uganda. Following early combat successes, the RPF guerrilla force was hampered by logistic constraints and the loss of its commander Fred Rwigyema and other leaders. Meanwhile, the Rwandan Army, benefiting from military resupply by France, Belgium, Egypt, and South Africa, contained the rebels primarily to the northeastern Mutara region. There the rebels are continuing guerrilla operations in an effort to disrupt Rwandan trade routes, wear down the Army, and pressure Kigali into negotiations.

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The Tutsi Legacy in Uganda

Rwandans, locally referred to as Banyarwanda, are the largest refugee group in Uganda. Most of the 225,000 Rwandan refugees are ethnic Tutsis who fled following the 1959 Hutu revolution that toppled the Tutsi monarchy and subsequent ethnic violence associated with Rwanda's independence in 1962. In the face of Kigali's decades-long refusal to repatriate them, the majority of Rwandan refugees became well established in Uganda and many have achieved a degree of economic success. Rwandan exiles played a key role in the insurgency that brought Museveni to power in 1986 and have constituted as much as 15 percent of the Ugandan Army. Tutsi rebel leader Fred Rwigyema, who fought alongside Museveni in various conflicts since 1976, rose to become NRA Deputy Commander and Uganda's Deputy Minister of Defense.

Many Ugandans, however, chafe over the longstanding Rwandan refugee presence in their country.

Ugandans in the border region also resent exiles as competitors for limited jobs and increasingly scarce arable land. For example, clashes between Ugandan peasants and Rwandan squatters have dramatically increased over the last year.

Ugandan public opinion also favored the invasion for a variety of reasons. Many Ugandans, for example, reportedly favor any development likely to rid their country permanently of the many Rwandan refugees who they believe take jobs, education, and land away from native Ugandans. Support for the invasion has also come from Ugandan border residents with ethnic ties to Rwanda and Burundi. Moreover, sympathy for the Tutsi exiles and their "just" cause against Kigali reportedly runs deep in the Ugandan Army.

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Pages: 4-7

Exemptions: (b) (1) ; (b)(3)