

Peaceful settlement of Rwandan conflict in sight : official

AFP, August 17, 1992

ARUSHA, Tanzania, Aug 17 (AFP) - Peace talks between the Rwandan government and rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) continued here Monday with both sides optimistic of reaching an amicable settlement soon, sources at the talks said.

After a weekend of tough negotiations over the definition of democracy, representatives from both sides were hopeful of striking agreement on restoration of the rule of law in the east African country battered by nearly two years of civil war, a Tanzanian foreign ministry official said.

"We made steady progress last night and I am quite optimistic of an agreement, most probably on Tuesday," said Ami Mpungwe one of the Tanzanian government representatives at the talks.

Both parties had "continued to show positive attitude," he added.

A source in the RPF delegation

told said the movement was seeking concrete a guarantee that would enable it to participate in the administration the country.

The Arusha negotiations, which went into their seventh day Monday, are the second phase of a peace process aimed at ending the war and establishing a government of national unity based on democracy and respect of human rights.

Also to be tackled is the possible integration of the RPF forces in the national army.

A ceasefire agreement reached during a previous round of talks here last month took effect at the beginning of August.

The mainly ethnic Tutsi RPF invaded Rwanda from Uganda in 1990 in an attempt to overthrow the 19-year-old Hutu dominated government of President Juvenal Habyarimana.

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