Rwandan army demands halt to fighting

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KIGALI, April 17 (AFP) - The Rwandan army demanded Sunday a complete halt to military operations and the setting up of "preventive patrols" prior to opening truce talks as sporadic fighting continued in the capital Kigali.

National radio said the armed forces demanded "an immediate halt to firing and military operations" and to "punitive expeditions" by the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), adding that security forces be permitted to "carry out preventive controls."

A second meeting between government and rebel negotiators following an hour of talks on Friday had been planned for Saturday but did not take place.

The Tutsi-dominated RPF has issued a set of conditions for truce talks including the dissolution of the interim government and of the Hutu-led presidential guard.

The United Nations mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) said the RPF was also calling for patrols to be carried out, but was insisting they should be joint patrols including government troops and UN peacekeepers.

The two sides were still considering each others' terms.

The radio bulletin was the first announcement of the army's conditions.

The interim government which has left Kigali for the provinces appointed a new chief of staff of the armed forces, Augustin Bizimungu, at a cabinet meeting on Saturday, to replace Deogratias Nasabimana who was killed at the same time as President Juvenal Habyarimana in an aircrash on April 6.

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