

# Presidents of Rwanda and Burundi killed

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UNITED NATIONS, April 6 (Reuter) - The presidents of both Rwanda and Burundi were killed when their plane was fired on as it was landing at Kigali, Rwanda, a senior U.N. official announced Wednesday.

Under-Secretary-General Chinmaya Gharekhan said the plane crashed over Kigali airport and "both presidents lost their lives."

He said he had been informed of the deaths of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamira by the U.N. special representative in Rwanda.

The two presidents were returning from a regional meeting in the Tanzanian capital of Dar Es Salaam.

Gharekhan also reported that Rwanda's U.N. ambassador told members of the Security Council that "it was not an accident. It was an assassination. There was rocket fire at the plane. ... The plane was brought down as it was landing and the presi-

dents were killed."

But he said the United Nations had no independent confirmation of the alleged assassination.

The United Nations has a 2,500-member peacekeeping force in Rwanda, which is still recovering from a three-year civil war between the majority Hutu and the Tutsi ethnic groups.

Security Council President Colin Keating of New Zealand told reporters that council members "expressed concern and condolences to the government and people of those two countries and to the families of all the dead involved in this dreadful tragedy."

"The tragedy is all the more acute because of the grave situation facing those two countries," Keating said.

"Therefore the members of the Security Council have asked me to reaffirm the council's desire that calm prevail in the next few days," he added.

He said the United Nations would

have to review the situation of U.N. personnel immediately “to ensure their safety and that they are being deployed to the best effect.”

At the meeting both presidents attended in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda agreed to send their foreign ministers to Burundi to help rebuild confidence in the government.

But after a day of talks at an African summit called to find ways to end Hutu-Tutsi tribal violence in Burundi and Rwanda, no mention was made in a statement of Tanzanian proposals for sending a peacekeeping force.

The leaders also called for reforms to the Burundian army, dominated by the minority Tutsi and seen as largely responsible for clashes since October with the Hutu majority.

Ntaryamira said he was grateful for neighbouring countries sheltering 800,000 Burundi refugees from the

tribal fighting since renegade troops killed Burundi’s first Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye, on October 21 last year in a failed coup.

The United Nations says 375,000 Burundians are registered as refugees in Zaire, Rwanda and Tanzania.

“Burundi is bleeding. I am aware it hurts your economies. Still, we need your help.” said Ntaryamira.

On Rwanda, the African leaders said they were concerned at delays since December in forming transitional institutions as agreed in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha last August.

The U.N. Security Council on Tuesday renewed the mandate for peacekeeping forces for Rwanda for four months but threatened to pull them out unless the Arusha peace agreements were honoured.

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