Fighting resumes in Kigali, interim government proposes truce

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KIGALI, April 13 (AFP) - Heavy fighting resumed in the Rwandan capital at dawn Wednesday with rebels vowing to control Kigali by the end of the day, as the interim government accused UN troops of backing rebels and offered a truce.

Artillery and small arms fire erupted at daybreak between Hutu government forces fighting guerrillas from the minority Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

The interim government, which fled the capital Tuesday, proposed a truce that would start at midday (1000 GMT) Wednesday in a statement broadcast over Rwanda radio.

The rebels have refused to recognize the interim leadership set up after the death of the presidents of Rwanda and neighboring Burundi in a plane crash last Wednesday and rejected any of its initiatives.

Tens of thousands of refugees have fled in the wake of the bloodbath triggered by the crash, which also prompted France and Belgium to evacuate their nationals.

In Geneva, UN High Commissioner for Refugees spokesman Christiane Berthiaume estimated some 10,000 people had been displaced by the conflict.

The government communique, which did not say where the cabinet was, accused troops in the United Nations Mission for Assistance in Rwanda (UNMAR) of "partiality" towards the Tutsi RPF rebels.

It accused the UN troops of "supplying technical assistance" to the rebels, and the Belgian UN contingent of helping evacuate Tutsi RPF members from Kigali – charges that hark back to the time when Tutsis were the overlords before Rwanda's independence from Belgium.

It also said the UN mission had shown "inexplicable shortcomings" in monitoring Kigali airport where President Juvenal Habyarimana's plane crashed.