

# OXFAM warning of Rwanda genocide

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OXFAM said yesterday that the systematic killing of the Tutsi minority in Rwanda amounted to genocide. The relief agency said the whereabouts of up to 500,000 Tutsi were not known, and their lives were in « grave danger ».

Maurice Herson, Oxfam's emergencies officer, said only about 30,000 Tutsi refugees had crossed the river marking the border with Burundi. They had been attacked along the way and by the Rwanda authorities at the border as they tried to cross. Many survivors were said to have « horrific wounds » : in some cases people had been mutilated their fingers or a foot cut off rather than killed.

He said many had been in hiding and had not eaten for ten days. He feared the chances of many more escaping were slim and that Tutsi still in southern Rwanda had little chance of survival. « Either they are being hun-

ted and killed or they will starve. They face extermination. » Oxfam's country representative in Tanzania, Alfred Sakafu, said that the Kagera river on the Rwanda-Tanzania border was so full of dead bodies that the river could not be used to supply water to refugees.

In Geneva, Tony Burgener, spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross, described the situation in Rwanda as the « heart of darkness ». He added : « When it comes to horror, this is one of the worst situations we have ever seen. »

Government troops bombarded rebel headquarters yesterday in Kigali, the Rwandan capital. UN officials said the headquarters at the shell-blasted parliament in the city were pounded for hours by army artillery. Several UN observers had to be evacuated from the building.