

April 24, 1994

## Rebel Official Calls a Truce For Rwanda

A Rwanda rebel leader announced today that his group would observe a cease-fire in the war with Government forces in which an estimated 100,000 people have been killed.

But he said he would not meet with Rwandan Government officials, who were heading for this northern Tanzania town for peace talks.

"The international community sees this as a way of stopping the massacres, so we have obliged," the secretary general of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, Theogene Rudasingwa, said of the cease-fire.

Mr. Rudasingwa said the cease-fire would begin at midnight Monday, the day peace talks are scheduled to start. But he said he had not come for the peace talks.

"I had two aims in coming here," he said. "One was to talk with the secretary-general of the Organization of African Unity, and to meet Tanzanian Government officials to brief them on our cease-fire." U.S. Urges Cease-Fire

The United States called on both sides Friday to agree to an immediate cease-fire and said it was prepared to help efforts to arrange a political settlement of their dispute.

Mr. Rudasingwa, the chief delegate from the rebel group, said he doubted the Government, which independent observers blame for most of the killing, could fulfill cease-fire conditions.

Human rights workers estimate that 100,000 people have been killed and two million people displaced in fighting since President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed April 6 in a plane crash that Government officials blamed on rebels.

The rebels have captured part of the Rwandan capital, Kigali, and a portion of the north in fighting that began following the crash. Killings Said to Continue

Aid workers said the killings were continuing in southern towns. It appeared that most of the victims were from the minority Tutsi tribe, which has been associated with the rebels, or supporters of opposition parties.

The Government, who are mostly from the majority Hutu tribe, did not comment on the cease-fire declaration by the rebels. The cease-fire was signed by Col. Alexis Kanyarengwe, the rebel leader, in the group's headquarters in northern Rwanda.

In the cease-fire statement, the rebels agreed to monitoring by the 270 United Nations observers who will remain in Rwanda.

The statement also contains an agreement to negotiate on how to carry out a nine-month-old peace accord, which was supposed to end the civil war and establish an all-party transitional Government. Plane Crash to Be Investigated

Under the cease-fire, an international tribunal would investigate the plane crash and punish anyone found responsible for killing the President or for carrying out massacres. It would also provide for joint control of Kigali airport by rebels and Government forces and for the creation of internationally supervised corridors to deliver aid and provide safe passage for civilians.

The Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity, Salim Ahmed Salim, welcomed the news of the rebel group's cease-fire declaration. "Much will depend on what happens on the ground but a cease-fire would be an important step towards ending the carnage and mayhem," Mr. Salim said.

On Friday, Mr. Salim criticized the United Nations for announcing the withdrawal of most of its 2,500 troops and observers from Kigali.

"When things get worse, when things become more miserable, it is incomprehensible to us that the U.N. presence should be reduced," he said.

Map shows the location of Kigali, Rwanda.