

# Rebels call for national unity government

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BRUSSELS, June 11 (AFP) - The rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR) called Thursday for a government of national unity including all political factions and trade union representatives.

Titus Rutaremara, a senior FPR official, also accused France of stepping up its military presence in the small highland nation at the same time as hosting peace talks in Paris.

"There's no valid reason for them (the French) to continue aiding a dictatorial regime," Rutaremara told a press conference in Brussels, capital of Rwanda's former colonial power.

On Monday, the Rwandan government, which has since April included opposition parties, and the FPR agreed in Paris to pursue face-to-face talks to end the civil war in the east central African country.

The government team led by Foreign Minister Boniface Ngulinzira and the rebel team, headed by FPR foreign affairs spokesman Mazi Mpanka, announced that they had for the

first time accepted the "principle of direct talks".

Last week, the FPR announced the capture of the northern town of Byumba, but Defence Minister James Gasana counter-claimed that three soldiers, 25 rebels and an unspecified number of civilians were killed as government troops beat off attempts to seize the military garrison.

The FPR said that 150 French troops have been sent to Byumba, while 450 more French soldiers went to Rwanda from their base at Bangui in the Central African Republic.

The French foreign ministry Wednesday said 150 extra troops arrived in Rwanda last weekend "to prevent any threat to the foreign community."

Some 175 French soldiers are generally stationed in Rwanda, where they guard the airport and other installations in the capital Kigali, watch over main communications routes and help train the Rwandan army.

Rwanda's ruler, retired general Juvenal Habyarimana, in April cal-

led on an opposition leader, Dismas Nsengiyaremye, to form a government but the former sole ruling party kept key portfolios such as defence and the interior.

The rebels are due to meet the government again in either Zaire or Tanzania on July 10 to 12.

The country has seen decades of bloody strife between the Tutsi mi-

nority, formerly Rwanda's traditional rulers, and the majority Hutus.

The army cracked down on Tutsis after the FPR, composed mainly of Tutsi exiles who had served in the Ugandan army, launched an insurrection in northern Rwanda in October 1990.

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