Rwanda Aide Calls Truce 'Last Chance'

Donatella Lorch

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Rebels who control half of Rwanda have said that the four-day cease-fire they began on Monday would not stop their drive to "liberate" the country and punish those responsible for the deaths of more than 100,000 people in the last three weeks.

Theogene Rudasingwa, secretary general of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, said the cease-fire was meant as a "last chance" for army forces to stop widespread massacres in Kigali, the Rwandan capital.

Human rights groups, Western diplomats and refugees fleeing Rwanda have said the massacres are primarily being carried out by soldiers of the Rwanda Army, which is dominated by the majority Hutu tribe, and not the rebels, who are mostly of the minority Tutsi tribe.

"We cannot leave any inch of the territory of Rwanda to a gang of criminals," Mr. Rudasingwa said Monday at a news conference in Nairobi. "These forces must be adequately isolated and very effectively defeated. That is the solution."

Massacres Followed Crash

The massacres began April 6 when the President of Rwanda, Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, was killed along with the President of neighboring Burundi in a plane crash near Kigali. Members of the Hutu-led Government blamed the rebels for shooting down the plane and it set off a wave of political and ethnic-related violence by Hutu hard-liners, aimed first at political moderates and then at all Tutsis.

Most of the moderate politicians in the Government were killed and the military immediately set up an interim all-Hutu Government. Since April 6, Rwandan Patriotic Front troops have taken over northern Rwanda and have surrounded Kigali.

Mr. Rudasingwa said the purpose of the rebels' cease-fire was to demonstrate to the world that they have control over their troops.

Stand By Peace Accord

Mr. Rudasingwa said the rebels stood by a peace agreement signed in Tanzania last August that was meant to end civil war in Rwanda and that called for power sharing and the creation of a mixed Tutsi-Hutu army. But he also said the rebels did not recognize the new interim Government and would not negotiate with it.

"The regime we are fighting is a rotten regime," he said. "As far as we're concerned there is no interim government."