

Rwandan teams agree to meet again to end war

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PARIS, June 8 (AFP) - The Rwandan government and a rebel front agreed in peace talks here to pursue face-to-face talks to find a negotiated settlement to the small east African nation's civil war.

In a joint statement, the government team led by Foreign Minister Boniface Ngulinzira and the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR) announced that they had for the first time accepted the "principle of direct talks".

The next meeting will take place in either Zaire or Tanzania on July 10 to 12, they said after three days of discussions here.

The rebel delegation is headed by FPR foreign affairs spokesman Mazi Mpaka.

Ngulinzira met Mpaka last month in the Ugandan capital Kampala, in the first contact since Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana let opposition parties into a coalition go-

vernment in April.

The two sides also agreed to ask France, the United States and former colonial power Belgium to "take part in talks as observers and to continue to support the peace process".

The Paris meeting had not been expected to lead to much more than a timetable for further talks and discussion of the role of nations not party to the conflict.

The statement came a day after Defence Minister James Gasana said three soldiers and 25 rebels were killed in renewed clashes in northeastern Rwanda, as he carried out a regional tour of inspection.

An unspecified number of civilians died as troops beat off rebel attempts to seize Byumba military garrison.

Opposition parties and the FPR guerrilla front met in Brussels earlier this week and said in a joint statement that retired general Habyarima-

na must be "forced to leave".

The country has seen decades of bloody strife between the Tutsi minority, 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.

Rwanda's new national unity government was formed as part of a transition from military dictatorship to multi-party democracy.

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