

Zairean security force enters Rwandan refugee camp

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GOMA, Zaire, Feb 12 (AFP) - The first elements of a 1,500-strong Zairean security force entered the sprawling Rwandan refugee camp here Sunday, starting a UN mission to end violence and intimidation in the camp.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, watched 150 troops take up positions and urged them to protect refugees and international relief workers threatened by Hutu militia leaders seeking to control more than a million refugees sheltering in Goma and another camp at Bukavu in eastern Zaire.

Ogata, however, stressed that the Zairean force would not try to separate the refugees from former soldiers. "This is not a force that is going to divide people, but a humanitarian law and order maintenance force," she said.

Zaire agreed Friday to deploy the force to tighten security and assist

UN aid officials in carrying out their mandate in the camps. The deal followed complaints from aid agencies who accused Zaire of allowing Hutu militias, which fled Rwanda last year after Tutsis seized power in a ferocious civil war, to gain sway in the camps.

Admiral Mavua Mudima, Zaire's deputy prime minister in charge of defence, who also watched the troops enter the camp, said it was the first time that troops of a national army had been used for a humanitarian mission in their own country under the UN banner.

"This is a test and a challenge in which you will have to look up to international opinion, which never ceases to criticise us," Mudima told the security force.

Carol Faubert, the UNHCR's special envoy, said it had not been decided whether to arm the soldiers, who were given mustard-coloured UN

uniforms and their salary of three dollars a day.

Two thirds of the force will be deployed in Goma, which shelters about 800,000 refugees from Rwanda, and the rest will go to Bukavu, which houses an estimated 300,000.

In Rwanda, meanwhile, a UN

Security Council delegation arrived Sunday from Burundi to discuss peace and national reconciliation with Rwandan leaders, according to Rwandan radio monitored by the BBC in Nairobi.

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