

France to raise Rwanda conflict at United Nations

AFP, March 3, 1993

PARIS, March 3 (AFP) - President Francois Mitterrand on Wednesday asked his foreign minister to seek U.N. intervention in the conflict between the Rwandan government and Uganda-supported rebels, a French government spokesman said.

Mitterrand made the move after Minister for Cooperation and Development Marcel Debarge briefed him on his recent mission to Rwanda, where 600 French troops are deployed to protect French citizens amid ongoing fighting, spokesman Louis Mermaz said after a cabinet meeting.

Mitterrand "asked the foreign minister to take steps that would allow the United Nations to intervene in this conflict because of its international nature," he said.

Debarge met Monday with Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, with the two agreeing that fighting between the Rwandan government and the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) could be ended only through

dialogue.

Diplomatic sources however said Museveni and Debarge differed on a number of issues with the Ugandan leader accusing France of interfering in the Rwandan conflict.

The RPF says French soldiers are fighting alongside Rwandan government troops, while France has accused Uganda of backing the RPF, which Kampala denies.

Debarge had earlier visited Rwanda where he held talks with Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana.

The mainly Tutsi RPF has waged a 28-month war in a bid to topple the Hutu-dominated government of President Habyarimana. French intelligence services have said the RPF attacks against government forces near the Uganda border in northern Rwanda use Ugandan logistic support.

eo/bm/ap AFP AFP SEQN-0321