

Burundi minister murdered in capital

AFP, March 11, 1995

BUJUMBURA, March 11 (AFP) - A Burundian political leader and minister was shot dead in the capital in broad daylight Saturday by an unidentified assailant who fled the scene, UN special representative Ahmedou Ould Abdallah's office said.

Ernest Kabushemeye was energy and mines minister in the newly-formed government and the leader of the Burundian People's Rally party which is allied to the party of Burundian President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU).

Kabushemeye was also a member of the Hutu majority in this country increasingly torn by ethnic trouble between Hutus and minority Tutsis, who dominate the armed forces.

The minister's bodyguard was wounded in the attack, which occurred in central Bujumbura.

It came less than two weeks after a new broad-based coalition government was formed in a bid to stave off the sort of mass bloodshed that

has hit its central African neighbor, Rwanda, which has the same ethnic makeup.

Kabushemeye was a minister since 1993, taking party in successive governments.

FRODEBU president Jean Minani immediately denounced the murder, charging that it "fit into a plan by forces opposed to democratic change, who aim to decapitate the Hutu elite," in a statement by telephone to AFP.

Ntibantunganya was abroad Saturday in Copenhagen where he is attending the UN Summit on Social Development, the UN representative's office said.

In October 1993, more than 50,000 people died in massacres sparked by the assassination of the country's first Hutu president, Melchior Ndadaye, elected in the country's first multiparty elections that year.

dn-hn/nb/ap
AFP AFP