

Representatives begin to arrive for all-party talks in Burundi

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BUJUMBURA, Feb 23 (AFP) - A delegation from the ruling Rwandan coalition arrived here Tuesday for talks with the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) aimed at ending the two-and-a-half-year civil war in the central African state, official sources said.

The three-day session, due to begin Wednesday, follows the RPF offensive earlier this month in which the rebels came to within 30 kilometres (20 miles) of the Rwandan capital, Kigali.

Burundi officials said the RPF delegation would arrive Wednesday.

The two delegations will stay in the same hotel here which is now heavily guarded.

The government delegation consists of two representatives from each of the five coalition parties : the National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development - the party of President Juvenal Habyarimana, the Democratic Republican Movement, the Social Democratic Party, the Christian Democratic Party, and the Liberal Party.

The RPF, which draws support from Rwanda's minority Tutsi tribe, began its rebellion against Habyarimana, who has ruled since 1973, with an invasion from Uganda in October 1990.

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