

Rwanda rebel official warns French

AFP, June 29, 1994

PRETORIA, June 29 (AFP) - A Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) official warned Wednesday that rebels would attack French troops in the central African country if they strayed from their humanitarian mission.

RPF associate director of international relations Ben Rugangazi called the deployment of French soldiers in the midst of the civil war a "colonial venture which will only worsen the situation."

"We hope the French are going to abide by their humanitarian role of escorting human convoys and food," Rugangazi said.

"If they want to supply the government (with arms) we shall see that as a direct violation of the mandate and we will have to confront them," he said.

Rugangazi also engaged in a slanging match with the Rwandan consul general in South Africa, Francois Bararwerekana, who described the RPF official's address as a "package of lies."

Some 2,500 French troops are expected to be deployed in Rwanda to stabilise the country plagued by ongoing civil war and widespread massacres of civilians.

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