

# Rwandan president's plane reported shot down

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BRUSSELS, April 6 (AFP) — A plane carrying President Juvenal Habyarimana of Rwanda was shot down Wednesday near the airport in the capital city Kigali but the president's fate was not immediately known, the Rwandan ambassador here was quoted as saying.

The Belga news agency quoted the ambassador of the tiny central African country as saying the plane "was burned to a cinder."

The president of the former Belgian colony was returning from a meeting with other African leaders in Tanzania on ethnic violence in Rwanda and neighboring Burundi.

The ambassador spoke with the president's top aide in Kigali who told him the plane burned completely, the agency said.

The aircraft was downed while approaching the airport, the ambassador said.

Rwanda has been wracked by violence pitting its Tutsi minority against

the majority Hutus.

A peace agreement signed in August of last year provided for the rebels of the Rwandan Patriotic Front, who are Tutsis, to share power with the Hutus.

The accord calls for the creation of a broad-based transitional government and a National Assembly. After two years, a new government is to be democratically elected.

But demobilization of soldiers and rebel troops under the accord has been delayed.

On Tuesday the United Nations Security Council warned Rwanda that it had six weeks to begin making progress on implementing the agreement.

The UN has sent about 2,500 troops from 24 countries to Rwanda.

Drought and the civil war have brought famine to Rwanda, where the lives of more than 500,000 people are threatened by food shortages, relief agencies say.

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