

Anti-Hutu crusade targets Rwandan exiles

by Linda de Hoyos

The Rwandan government called on March 4 for a crusade against Rwandan Hutus, not just those in the Democratic Republic of Congo, but also exiles in Europe and other countries. The call was issued by government spokesman Wilson Rutayisire, in the wake of the killing of eight Western tourists and one Ugandan in the Bwindi forest on March 1, allegedly by Rwandan rebels. "If there is no international crusade against these criminals," said Rutayisire, "and the matter is left to certain individuals, they will be left to kill who they want to kill." He said the crusade must also be extended to Europe: "Their mentors and leaders are in Europe and the United States." The call for an international lynch mob against Rwandan Hutus and exiles is based on the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) version of events of 1994, in which they claim that forces loyal to the government of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana systematically slaughtered up to 1 million Tutsis. The mass bloodletting that occurred in 1994, however, had been sparked by the assassination of Habyarimana, along with his chief of staff, on April 6, a murder which is currently "unsolved" and for which there is no investigation. While a hard core of Hutu extremists were geared for a liquidation of Tutsis in Rwanda, this by no means encompassed every member of the Rwandan government, nor every Hutu. Furthermore, many Hutus were killed in the panic that gripped the country in the wake of the President's murder.

However, with the international press giving currency only to the RPF side of the story, the Rwandan government wants to use the tourist murders in Uganda to fuel its revenge. Rutayisire's statement is a threat that the Rwandan government will take matters into its own hands, unless the international community moves to back a full-scale military assault on Rwandan Hutus in the Congo, and against political exiles and intellectuals abroad.

Hit-lists drawn up

There are multiple indications, however, that the Rwandan government is already taking matters into its own hands. According to a release of Feb. 15 by the organization *Afrique-Verité-Espoir* ("Africa-Truth-Hope" — AVE) in Belgium, the government of Vice President and Defense Minister Paul Kagame has deployed those who are considered "Tutsi extremists," to direct death squad operations, particularly in Europe. The squads are, according to this report, to be headed by Colonel Karemera, Colonel Mugambage, and Jacques Biho-

zagara. Bihozagara is now the new Rwandan ambassador in Belgium. AVE further reports that a hit-list has been drawn up for such planned networks by the Rwandan government, which includes the following individuals:

- Faustin Twagiramungu, former prime minister of the Rwandan Patriotic Front government from 1994-95, when he fled the country in the wake of mass killing of Hutus. Twagiramungu left jointly with former Interior Minister Seth Sendashonga. Sendashonga was the founder of the Forces for Democracy in Rwanda, and was working for a political program for democracy and reconciliation in the country, when he was murdered in Nairobi, Kenya, in June 1998. Twagiramungu then organized the Union of Rwandan Democratic Forces in September 1998, to unify Rwandan political forces and seek aid from Western powers to bring about an end to the civil war inside Rwanda.

- Joseph Matata, head of the Center for the Struggle against Impunity and Injustice in Rwanda. Based in Brussels, the Center puts out information it receives of all human rights violations in Rwanda.

- Paul Mbaraga, a Rwandan journalist who was previously based in the Netherlands, but was recently forced to leave by the Dutch government.

- Colonel Nindiliyimana, former chief of police under the Habyarimana government.

- Eugene Ruberangeyo, former comptroller of the Habyarimana government and now an officer of the Front for the Resistance Forces for Democracy of Twagiramungu.

- Jean Gahururu, former director general of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Women's Conditions under the Habyarimana government and now spokesman for the URDF.

At the same time, death threats are known to have gone out to certain targeted Rwandan exiles in the United States.

The assassins have already become active. In February, Pasteur Musabe, the former general manager of the Banque Continentale Africaine (BCA) in Rwanda, was murdered in Cameroon. An old friend of current Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, Musabe worked at the BCA directly under Valens Kajeguhakwa, the current minister to the President and the man believed to be "running" Bizimungu. In his capacity at the bank, Musabe was privy to all the financial wheelings and dealings of both the Habyarimana government and the transfer of monies to the RPF to finance the war. He was also used by Habyarimana as an envoy in any secret negotiations with the RPF during the 1990-94 war. It is believed that Musabe was murdered to ensure that his secrets never see the light of day.

In early February, two Rwandan exiles were placed under arrest in Nairobi, and brought to Arusha, Tanzania, site of the United Nations-sponsored Tribunal for crimes against humanity carried out in Rwanda in 1994. The two are former Information Minister Erliczer Niyitegeka and former Foreign Minister Casimir Bizimungu. Erliczer will stand trial; no charges have been brought against Bizimungu.