

# London's Museveni runs extermination campaign in Zaire

by Linda de Hoyos

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni was forced to defend himself in Paris, during a working visit there on Feb. 1-12, from charges that Ugandan troops are in Zaire, waging war against the government under the cover of mercenary Laurent Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces. The grilling of Museveni in Paris followed reports from U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns on Feb. 5 that Museveni had been told by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to withdraw his troops from Zaire.

In Paris, Museveni categorically denied the charge, stating: "There are no Ugandan troops in Zaire, and there will never be." But a few hours later, it was reported that on the night of Feb. 10, a cargo plane carrying Ugandan troops and military equipment into eastern Zaire crashed inside the Zairean border, a senior Defense Ministry official of Zaire reported. The Zairean official said: "It was a cargo plane from Uganda. A contingent of Ugandan troops were on board. Several people died, but the death toll is not yet known. The survivors have been captured by a group of Zairean soldiers who were around the crash site."

Despite the growing evidence of Ugandan, Rwandan, and Burundian troops inside Zaire, and despite official protests against the invasion of its territory lodged by Zairean officials to the United Nations Security Council, the Security Council has remained silent on the matter, and so far, the invasion force is operating with impunity.

The primary victims of the Ugandan invasion are the Rwandan Hutu refugees. Kabila et al. are now besieging the refugee camps at Lubutu and Tingi-Tingi, where refugees are congregated, but have not received food, water, or medical supplies. On Feb. 9, Kabila demanded that over 100,000 Rwandan refugees in the Tingi-Tingi camp in Zaire be "permitted" to leave the camp on foot—a death march given their condition. Only the day before, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata had been at Tingi-Tingi, and expressed "horror" at the condition of the 127,000 refugees there.

All aid workers left the camp on Feb. 8, as Kabila threatened that his forces were only 12 miles from the camp, and demanded the UN force the refugees out so he would not have to attack the camp. However, as Kabila et al. move closer, a reported 35,000 more refugees have come into Tingi-Tingi, as the Ugandan forces send them fleeing from the bush.

It is widely believed that Ogata has used her office at the UN to force the refugees back into Kabila's "humanitarian corridor." The Rally for the Return of Democracy in Rwanda (RDR) issued a statement from Nairobi, Kenya on Feb. 10, charging that Ogata had "deliberately" abandoned the refugee camps for political reasons. "The UNHCR has used every means possible to get the refugees back to Rwanda, and wants now to starve them to force them to go back," the statement said. "If it is true that repatriation is indubitably everybody's objective, there are factors that must not be neglected: the physical and psychological state of the refugees, and the security situation in Rwanda, which is deteriorating."

Within Zaire itself, Western press outlets report that Kabila et al. are carrying out a campaign of "extermination" against the Hutus still in Zaire. As reported in the Feb. 12 *New York Times*: "Credible witnesses said rebels swept into the small town of Shabunda the other day, encircled as many of the 40,000 or so Rwandan refugees as they could, separated out the young Hutu men and machine-gunned an unknown number. The others were simply allowed to go. . . . There are as many as 300,000 Rwandans stranded in Zaire. Most are ordinary men, women, and children, but it is widely believed that there are also thousands of former Hutu militiamen and soldiers. Many of these people already risk death from starvation, dehydration, and disease, but for their pursuers, that is not enough."

## Bizimungu aide admits to slaughter

There can no longer be any pretense that there is safety for the refugees within Rwanda. On Jan. 28, in the capital city Kigali, Joseph Bideri, media adviser to Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu, admitted to the press that the Rwandan military was simply killing people in two prefectures of Ruhengeri and Kibungo. He said point blank: "We are killing people but these are the people who carried out the genocide in 1994"—although there has been no due process of any kind. The recent spate of killings of aid workers in Rwanda is also part of the process. Either the Rwandan government is killing the workers in order to force all non-governmental organizations and international organizations out of the country, in order to carry out mass murder in Rwanda under a shroud of silence; or, the aid workers are being killed by Hutu militants as charged. One explanation for this, according to Rwandan sources, is that the aid workers are pinpointing the Hutu refugees to the Rwandan military, which guns them down in the same fashion as Kabila's Rwandan-Ugandan forces do in Zaire.

There is widespread agreement among European and African capitals: Unless the Ugandan, Rwandan, and Burundian military is forced out of Zaire—at which point the Kabila rebellion collapses—the extermination directed by Museveni on behalf of the British Privy Council, which conveys its wishes through Baroness Lynda Chalker, will continue, producing the most concentrated genocide of the 20th century.