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RWANDA: Fighting May Be Prolonged

Fighting continues in the northeast between invading Tutsi exiles and the Rwandan Army and its Zairian allies.

Some rebels have been pushed back to the Muvumba River area where the terrain favors guerrilla tactics, but a large rebel force remains at Gabiro. Unconfirmed press reports say the rebels are being supplied and reinforced from Uganda despite Kampala's efforts to seal the border. Ugandan President Museveni and the French Government have called for a regional peace conference to negotiate an end to the conflict. Kigali has detained some 3,000 suspected rebel sympathizers, and press reports claim the Rwandan military has attacked Tutsi villages in the Mutara region and conducted summary executions. Rwanda's main overland supply route is still closed, causing shortages of food and fuel in the capital, and the departure of European expatriates has curtailed medical and other services.

Some of the rebel force—which may number as many as 5,000—probably have split into small guerrilla bands and may have infiltrated the local populace, increasing the likelihood of prolonged fighting and ethnic reprisals that might spill over into neighboring states. President Habyarimana will have difficulty balancing outside pressure for a settlement with the resistance of his Hutu supporters to an accommodation of Tutsi interests. Kigali is quiet, and there is no direct threat to the approximately 110 US citizens there, but guerrilla activities could endanger civilians.

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