

## DR Congo denounces UN "ultimatum" over massacre allegation

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BRUSSELS, Sept 16 (AFP) - The new regime in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on Tuesday denounced what it called a UN "ultimatum" to allow human rights investigators to look into alleged massacres in the former Zaire.

DRC Foreign Minister Bizima Karaha, speaking in Brussels, accused the United Nations of engaging in politics after talks with his Belgian counterpart Erik Derycke.

On Monday, a UN team which has already been in Kinshasa for three weeks gave President Laurent Kabila's government two days to allow it to launch an enquiry into the suspected massacre of Rwandan refugees by Kabila's former rebels.

"Issuing ultimatums is unacceptable to us," Karaha said, contending that the UN team has "not been stopped from going wherever it wants", but adding that protecting its members requires "a minimum of organi-

sation."

Fred Eckhard, chief spokesman for UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, said at UN headquarters in New York on Monday that the UN team will travel to an alleged massacre site despite government resistance.

However Eckhard stopped short of calling the move an ultimatum to recalcitrant officials in the country renamed Democratic Republic of Congo after Kabila ousted Zaire's dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in May, four months before Mobutu died in exile.

The UN investigators have "informed the government of their intent," said Eckhard, adding, "This is their fourth week in Kinshasa, they're eager to get into the field."

Togolese lawyer Atsu Koffi Amega, who heads the investigating panel, told journalists in Kinshasa that the mission had decided to start work Wednesday in the northwest Mbandaka region, where many refugees

were allegedly massacred.

The UN investigators have been blocked from starting work at numerous turns by ministers and officials in Kinshasa over the past three weeks, despite written guarantees from Kabila to Annan.

The regime has been particularly vigorous in stalling investigations in the eastern part of the country, where thousands of Rwandan Hutu refugees are believed to have been killed in the first stages of Kabila's westward sweep across the country.

The refugees originally fled across their border to Zaire in 1994 when Tutsi rebels ousted a Rwandan Hutu

army and extremist militiamen accused of the genocide of more than half a million Tutsis and moderate rebels between April and July that year.

Mobutu's allies accused Rwanda and Uganda of backing Kabila, while his victorious Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation (AFDL) charged that armed Rwandan Hutus were fighting the insurrection in Zaire.

"What we are hoping is that the ministers will simply comply with the president's written approval to the secretary general that this team could get under way," said Eckhard.

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