

# Hutu extremists tipped off about weapons swoop: UN

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KIGALI, Dec 17 (AFP) - A number of Hutu extremists were tipped off about a UN raid in refugee camps during which more than 1,000 arms of all types were confiscated and 43 "criminals" arrested, a UN spokesman said here Saturday.

The UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) "has reason to believe that some criminals were informed well in advance that this operation was to take place and therefore left the camp prior to our arrival," captain Stephane Grenier told reporters here.

Almost 2,000 UN troops staged massive raids on Wednesday and Thursday in the Kibeho and Ndago refugee camps in southwestern Rwanda to disarm and detain Hutu extremists who have been killing and wounding fellow refugees.

The camps in Rwanda - like those in neighbouring countries - harbour

members of the majority Hutu tribe who were defeated by the Tutsis in a savage civil war that ended in July after the Tutsis captured Kigali.

Despite the escape of some Hutus, Grenier said that "the operation was successfully completed without any violence. The camps have been cleansed of the intimidatory influence of the extremists."

Members of the Hutu Interahamwe militias massacred hundreds of thousands of Tutsis and Hutu opponents - butchering men, women and children with machetes and garden hoes - and have since come to dominate many of the camps.

The UNAMIR plans to maintain troops in the Kibeho and Ndago camps to "create a climate of confidence and security among the displaced and discourage criminals from returning," said Grenier.

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