



INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS

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UPDATE NO 7 ON ICRC ACTIVITIES IN RWANDA
26 April 1994**Violence still raging in Rwanda**

Hundreds of thousands of people killed in the last two weeks, one million or more displaced persons, hospital patients executed... no words can describe what is happening in Rwanda today. Only the look in the eyes of the expatriates coming back from this appalling massacre tells it all.

The ICRC is shocked and extremely concerned by the sheer scale of this horrific tragedy.

ICRC concentrates its forces in Kigali

In the present circumstances the ICRC is unable to protect the victims of this catastrophe and has even had to leave temporarily the southern town of Butare, powerless to act, after witnessing systematic massacres and an unimaginable level of violence.

The ICRC's activities are now concentrated on the capital, Kigali, where the delegation continues to treat one hundred wounded in its own hospital and assist the Kigali Central Hospital, where 600 patients are undergoing treatment. These figures pale into insignificance compared to the number of wounded in need of medical attention.

The arrival on 22 of April of a second convoy from Bujumbura has allowed the ICRC to replenish its stocks of medicine and medical and surgical material. A new surgical team arriving with the convoy has taken over from the previous teams who were working for weeks under very stressful conditions.

In spite of the delegation's unrelenting efforts, very little can be done at the moment to protect the victims of violence and fighting. The ICRC has therefore decided to adapt the number of its staff to the activities being carried out.

At present 15 expatriates are working at the delegation in Kigali, including staff seconded by the American, Danish, Netherlands and Finnish National Societies.

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Preparing for relief operations

An ICRC team from Uganda has managed to contact some of the displaced people who had returned to the northern part of Rwanda before the latest crisis as well as the displaced people who left Nyacyonga camp after the most recent outbreak of violence.

The ICRC is now taking steps to launch a new assistance programme in the north of the country and is currently identifying the population most in need, it is visiting Byumba and setting up a logistics base in Kabale, Uganda. Another base has been set up in Ngara, Tanzania, in order to assist some 250,000 displaced people in the Rusomo area (south-east Rwanda).

At this stage, however, the ICRC does not want to encourage people to concentrate around food distribution centres, since this could put them even more at risk.

Deteriorating situation in Burundi

The security situation in Burundi is deteriorating rapidly. Some areas of Bujumbura are very tense after the government's ultimatum for armed civilians to surrender their weapons by 6 PM on 25 April.

The ICRC is now reinforcing its team in Bujumbura where some 14 expatriates are already present, including two people seconded by the Canadian and Netherlands National Societies.

Finance

The Emergency Appeal launched by the ICRC in December 1993 was drawn up on the basis of a big assistance operation for 600,000 displaced people. At this stage, all the indications are that this number will most probably swell.

The ICRC's 1994 Emergency Appeal for Rwanda stands at CHF 39,601,347 (USD 27,693,249 at today's exchange rate). So far, only CHF 4,284,674 has been pledged and received.

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