

Rwanda raps rights report

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KIGALI, March 24 (AFP) - A report alleging massive and systematic human rights violations in Rwanda had been put together in a hurry and was one-sided, President Juvenal Habyarimana complained in a statement made here late Tuesday.

The report by the Paris-based International Federation for the Rights of Man (FIDH) said the violations were "deliberate government policy" and that Habyarimana and his officials bore heavy responsibility for it.

As a result of the report, the former colonial power Belgium recalled its ambassador for consultations at the beginning of the month and said it was reviewing bilateral cooperation.

Habyarimana accused the FIDH of reaching "hasty conclusions," and said a properly mounted inquiry ought to have been wary of "one-way testimony" about political and ethnic factors.

The president, in power since a bloodless coup in 1973, said it was deplorable that the probe took no account of the scale of atrocities against civilians by the rebel Patriotic Front since it started civil war in October 1990.

The two sides have a ceasefire in place and are continuing lengthy peace talks at Arusha, Tanzania.

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