

Rwandan peace talks hit hurdle over parliament

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DAR ES SALAAM, Oct 28 (AFP) - Rwanda's government and the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) hit a hurdle in peace talks on Wednesday when they failed to agree over parliamentary representation during transition to democracy.

Informed sources at the talks in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha said the two sides could not agree on modalities of representation in a proposed transitional assembly.

An agreement also had yet to be reached on when cabinet portfolios in an interim administration would be allocated, the sources said.

In the Rwandan capital Kigali, meanwhile, there was disagreement within the coalition cabinet Tuesday over continuing the negotiations, government sources said.

Ministers from the former single ruling National Republic Movement for Democracy and Development

wanted the talks suspended for at least two weeks as the parliamentary issue was ironed out.

But the opposition ministers in the cabinet decided to push on with the negotiations, Prime Minister Dismas Nsengiyaremye explaining that a suspension would "discourage the army, displaced people and the negotiators."

Tanzanian foreign ministry official Ami Mpungwe said the parties had been given more time for "further direct private consultations" to deal with two issues remaining on the power-sharing agenda.

Both sides had already declared their commitment to the establishment of a broad-based government of national unity and agreed on the role of the presidency during the transition, constitutional principles and cabinet, Mpungwe said.

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