

***BURUNDI, RWANDA, TANZANIA,
UGANDA & ZAIRE: RWANDAN AND
BURUNDIAN REFUGEES***

06 November 1996

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EMERGENCY REPORT - KIVU CRISIS

Latest events

Zaire •

No aid workers, neither national or expatriate, were allowed to approach the areas where the refugees are believed to be, therefore very scarce information continues to be available on the fate of more than 700,000 amassed west of Goma. Some reports speak of an empty Mugunga camp with thousands of refugees wandering around aimlessly while others picture the camp as relatively calm with some activities still being carried out by local personnel. It is also believed that a substantial number of people should have left the area of Mugunga, heading towards Sake and possibly further inland.

The Head of Rwanda Delegation travelled yesterday to Gisenye with the aim of re-establishing contacts with the Zaire Red Cross volunteers, reported to be still active in Goma. In the early hours of today he succeeded in reaching the Federation office, just a few hundreds meters from the border, where he could meet quite a number of volunteers and identify the assets still available. The situation in town was relatively calm and the volunteers reported fighting still going on 5 to 10 kilometres to the west. During the last three days they had collected more than 400 bodies from the roads close to the centre of the town. Substantial assets were found in the compound, including six lorries, two large generators and the full stock of diesel fuel. More means of communication were handed over during the visit and regular contacts were scheduled for the coming days. Ways and means to support the Goma branch of Zaire Red Cross are currently being discussed between Geneva and Kigali.

Meanwhile, intense negotiation is taking place between Geneva and senior members of the Zairian government in Kinshasa with the objective of making an assessment mission to east Zaire, west of Goma and Bukavu, possible.

Burundi •

Katumba transit camp's population has stabilised between 8,000 and 9,000 as many of the returnees started going back to their villages of origin. A dysentery epidemic which created quite some concern seems now under control.

Congo •

Almost 800 ethnic Tutsi were reported to have crossed the Congo river today, fleeing violence in Kinshasa. A proper site has been identified by the Congolese Red Cross to set up a temporary camp for them; as more are expected to cross shortly, plans for the assistance to 5,000 for six months have been forwarded to Geneva.

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