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## U.N. Says Two Observers Savagely Killed in Congo

By REUTERS

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BUNIA, Congo (Reuters) - U.N. officials have found the bodies of two colleagues killed while working as military observers in eastern Congo, a spokesman said on Monday.

"They were savagely killed," said Hamadoun Toure, spokesman for the U.N. mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC).

"We have begun an investigation into who has done this so we can put them to trial," he told reporters in Bunia, a town in the east of the country at the center of fighting, ethnic killings and looting in the past two weeks.

Militias linked to the rival Hema and Lendu tribes have been battling for supremacy in the region.

The two U.N. observers, believed to be a Nigerian and a Jordanian, disappeared last Tuesday. A helicopter search team found their bodies in Mongbwalu, 45 miles northwest of Bunia, on Sunday.

It was not clear who controlled the territory where they were found and most MONUC observers were withdrawn from the area after the bodies were retrieved.

Militia groups and Congolese President Joseph Kabila signed a cease-fire on Friday in Tanzania, but there has been sporadic fighting since and the situation remains volatile.

There are around 700 MONUC observers in Bunia. Their role is to monitor cease-fires or peace agreements, but have often found themselves watching violence, lacking a mandate to intervene.

Meanwhile, over 800 South African peacekeepers arrived in the eastern Congo town of Kindu on their way to Bukavu, Goma and Lubero, where refugees have been fleeing from Burundi.

Colonel Ronnie Bradford, MONUC chief of staff in Kinshasa, said about 1,000 South African soldiers would be deployed shortly to maintain security in the areas. Over 12,000 people have been uprooted in recent days following heavy clashes between Burundi's Tutsi-dominated army and Hutu rebels.

Fighting in the tiny central African nation continues despite a cease-fire signed by the government and main Hutu rebel Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD) in December.

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