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## **Rwanda Genocide Movie Criticizes UN Role**

By Reuters

KIGALI—A new film about Rwanda's 1994 genocide criticizes the United Nations for standing by as the slaughter unfolded, and asks if the world body has learned any lessons from the killings, its director said on Wednesday.

“Shake Hands with the Devil” is based on the book by Romeo Dallaire, the former Canadian general in command of U.N. forces in Rwanda at the time who was so traumatized by his failure to stop the massacres he later tried to kill himself.

“Our film is about a man who was aware genocide was coming and tried to get the U.N. to allow him to do something about it, but it instead it turned him down,” director Roger Spottiswoode said in an interview in Kigali.

“It is really about the bigger issue of what the U.N. role is in situations like these,” he told Reuters at the capital's Amahoro stadium, which sheltered thousands of terrified residents in 1994 as the killers roamed the streets outside.

Spottiswoode said the film was particularly timely given the calls on the United Nations to intervene to end the war in Lebanon, and the ongoing efforts to send a U.N. force to stop rampant murders and rapes in Sudan's troubled Darfur region. The United States has called the Darfur conflict genocide.

### **Focus On U.N.**

In Rwanda, Dallaire had alerted his bosses in New York that the country was sliding into chaos. But then he could do little more than watch as ethnic Hutu extremists butchered more than 800,000 ethnic Tutsi and moderate Hutus in 100 days of carnage.

The big screen version of his book follows three other films about the genocide released in the last two years.

But while the others, including the award-winning “Hotel Rwanda,” have focused on the tales of individuals caught up in the bloodshed, Spottiswoode said his movie would be the first to examine in detail the United Nations' lack of action.

“The U.N. has proved to be a complicated and imperfect organization,” said Spottiswoode, who also directed “Tomorrow Never Dies.” “Is it an institution that should be improved or destroyed? These are the questions raised in the movie.”

The Canadian director began filming “Shake Hands with the Devil” on location in Rwanda in June, with Roy Dupuis starring as Dallaire. It is scheduled for release in September 2007.

The three other genocide films have shocked Western audiences with the scale and savagery of the slaughter, but have been criticized by many Rwandan survivors, who dismiss them as money-making exercises that got the story wrong.

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