

## **Canada protects activist after miraculous escape: Woman hid in attic, outbluffed soldiers; [FINAL Edition]**

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### **Abstract (Summary)**

An exhausted Monique Mujawamariya arrived in Brussels aboard a military aircraft after a harrowing five days in which she huddled in her attic as soldiers killed her neighbors, said Susan Osnos, public-affairs director for the U.S. human-rights group Africa Watch.

In an interview from New York, Osnos said Mujawamariya had left Rwanda after being designated an honorary Canadian citizen.

Because international relief flights, operated on behalf of the United Nations and western governments, are only carrying foreign nationals or persons deemed equivalent, Mujawamariya was told the priest who helped her could not be flown out with her, Osnos said.

### **Full Text (349 words)**

OTTAWA - After a miraculous escape from death squads trying to hunt her down, the head of Rwanda's human-rights movement fled to Europe Wednesday under diplomatic protection from Canada.

An exhausted Monique Mujawamariya arrived in Brussels aboard a military aircraft after a harrowing five days in which she huddled in her attic as soldiers killed her neighbors, said Susan Osnos, public-affairs director for the U.S. human-rights group Africa Watch.

In an interview from New York, Osnos said Mujawamariya had left Rwanda after being designated an honorary Canadian citizen.

Mujawamariya, 39, who has difficulty walking and was unable to take the pain of her confinement any more, bluffed her way past an army patrol outside her home in the Rwandan capital Kigali by flashing a photo of a man in military garb she said was her husband.

She then made contact with a local Christian cleric she knew, who drove her to a Kigali hotel, which has been serving as a press centre for foreign journalists.

Foreign diplomats made arrangements to have the activist removed to safety on the understanding that "she was to be treated as a Canadian citizen," said Osnos.

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But Mujawamariya told authorities he "was her businessman husband" and she wasn't leaving without him, Osnos said. They both boarded the flight for Brussels.

In Ottawa, an aide to Foreign Affairs Minister Andre Ouellet credited Montreal's International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development and its president, Ed Broadbent, for spearheading international efforts to save Mujawamariya.

Last week, as the civil war erupted, Mujawamariya was on the phone to a friend in the United States when soldiers burst in her door after dragging neighbors from homes and shooting them dead on the street.

She hobbled into bushes outside her home, hid for hours in heavy rain and then, at night, sneaked back into her house.

**Credit: SOUTHAM NEWS**