

U.N. troops kill suspected gang leader

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PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti --

U.N. peacekeepers and Haitian police on Tuesday killed a suspected gang leader wanted in the kidnap-slaying of a French businessman.

Charles Junior Acdelhy was shot to death after he opened fire on Brazilian peacekeepers and police as they tried to arrest him during an early morning raid in Port-au-Prince's notorious Cite Soleil slum, U.N. spokeswoman Sophie Boutaud de la Combe said. No peacekeepers or police were injured.

Acdelhy, known as Yoyo Piman, was accused of helping lead a Cite Soleil gang blamed for a wave of kidnappings and killings that engulfed the impoverished Caribbean nation after the bloody 2004 uprising of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

Acdelhy was wanted on international warrants for homicide, kidnapping and criminal conspiracy, Boutaud said, including the January 2004 abduction and killing of Claude-Bernard Lauture, a French businessman of Haitian descent.

Boutaud said peacekeepers had surrounded a section of Cite Soleil when Acdelhy ran out and began shooting. She said peacekeepers warned Acdelhy to put down his gun before they shot him "in legitimate self defense."

The 8,800-strong, Brazil-led U.N. peacekeeping force once waged daily gunbattles with armed gangs in Cite Soleil, Haiti's largest and poorest slum, but has seen the number of confrontations fall sharply since a U.N. gang offensive earlier this year that left several top gang leaders dead or in jail.