

German ambassador in Kigali leaves Rwanda

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BONN, April 12 (Reuter) - The German ambassador to Rwanda has left the capital Kigali and travelled to neighbouring Burundi, the foreign ministry said on Tuesday.

A ministry spokesman said envoy Dieter Hoelscher and his wife had decided to leave Kigali because tribal fighting was escalating and it seemed the last opportunity to get out.

Hoelscher would remain in the Burundian capital Bujumbura to coordinate the rescue of 11 staff members of Germany's Deutsche Welle radio, trapped in their Kigali office by intense fighting and mined roads.

"We are feverishly trying to find a way to evacuate the Deutsche Welle workers," the foreign ministry spokesman said.

He said any evacuation would be difficult because there was heavy fighting in the area where the office was located.

The foreign ministry believed all German nationals apart from the Deutsche Welle staff known to be living in Rwanda had left the country, where the rocket-attack killings of the presidents of Burundi and Rwanda last Wednesday sparked furious bloodletting in which at least 10,000 people have been killed.

German radio reported that a convoy carrying about 80 Germans arrived early on Tuesday in Bujumbura.

About 120 of the estimated 300 Germans resident in Rwanda were flown back to Bonn from Bujumbura on Monday. They had travelled on Saturday in convoys to Bujumbura and were then flown to Bonn in a German army Airbus plane.

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