

Ghana will not pull U.N. troops out of Rwanda alone

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ACCRA, April 20 (Reuter) - Ghana has confidence in the United Nations and will not unilaterally pull its 850 troops out of the crumbling U.N. peacekeeping mission in Rwanda, Defence Minister Mahama Iddrisu said on Wednesday.

He told the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Ghanaian soldiers were stationed around Kigali airport and had not come under attack. Only one had been wounded, by a stray bullet.

Belgium has evacuated all its 450 troops from Rwanda after 10 peacekeepers died while trying to defend the prime minister who was hunted down after President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed in a rocket attack on his plane on April 6.

Iddrisu said Ghanaian troops were in Rwanda under the auspices of the United Nations "in which we have faith and hope that the safety of our troops will be paramount and will be protected".

Belgium has called for a complete withdrawal of the UNAMIR force, which after the Belgian pullout must rely on more lightly-armed contingents from Bangladesh, Senegal and Poland as well as Ghana.

U.N. officers in Kigali said on Wednesday they had been told the rest of the once 2,500-strong force would soon quit the central African country, ripped apart by civil war and tribal savagery since Habyarimana's death.

They said the decision had been triggered by the refusal of government forces to hand the airport over to neutral U.N. control. Some 250 U.N. "blue helmets" would stay in a final attempt to broker an end to the slaughter.

U.S.-based Human Rights Watch says as many as 100,000 people may have been killed in the past two weeks.

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