

UN Council reduces Rwanda peacekeepers to 270

Reuters, April 22, 1994

UNITED NATIONS, April 21 (Reuter) - The Security Council voted late Thursday to pull out almost all U.N. troops from Rwanda, where a bloody civil war is raging with tens of thousands of civilians brutally murdered.

The council suspended its marathon debate on Bosnia to adopt a resolution reducing the 2,500-strong force in Rwanda to a skeleton military and civilian team of about 270.

The resolution was adopted by a unanimous 15-0 vote.

It would leave the force commander, Canadian General Romeo Dallaire, and his staff in Kigali to act as an intermediary between the warring Hutu and Tutsi groups and help relief operations.

He would be protected by an infantry company of about 150 as well as some military observers. The total contingent, including civilians, would number about 270. The original force had 2,500 military personnel.

The council, however, pledged to consider promptly any recommendations to increase the force level and mandate of the U.N. operation, depending on developments.

The U.N. Assistance Mission For Rwanda, known as UNAMIR, was established last October as a traditional peacekeeping force to help implement a new peace agreement. But U.N. troops were caught in tribal violence set off by the assassination of Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana on April 6.

(c) Reuters Limited 1994