

Canada to evacuate citizens from Rwanda

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OTTAWA, April 8 (Reuter) - Canada will send a military transport plane to Rwanda to evacuate about 200 Canadian citizens endangered by the outbreak of tribal bloodshed, foreign ministry officials said Friday.

The plane will join an international rescue operation to evacuate foreigners from the East African country, which was plunged into a bloody conflict by its president's death in an aircrash.

"We're telling Canadians to stay put and we'll try to get them out," Gar Pardy, the Foreign Ministry's director of consular affairs, told reporters.

Red Cross officials in the hillside capital Kigali of the former Belgian colony reported the central hospital overflowing with dead and wounded and said the death toll in the bloodbath could run into thousands.

Officials could not confirm reports that a Canadian married to Rwanda's labour and social affairs minister Landouald Ndasingwa was killed

along with their two children.

A foreign ministry statement said the Canadians were at considerable risk from continuing fighting in and around the Rwandan capital of Kigali, though they did not appear to be targeted in the fighting.

A Canadian man interviewed by telephone from Kigali told the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that he and other Canadians were in danger and urged the government to send helicopters to pick them up.

Pardy said 100 Canadians live in Kigali, where the heaviest fighting has occurred since the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi died in a suspicious plane crash Thursday.

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Andre Ouellet called for an immediate end to the tribal bloodshed, which has killed thousands of people according to Red Cross reports.

"Canadians are shocked at these acts of terrorism and appeal urgently for moderation on the part of all parties to end the senseless loss of life

in Rwanda,” Ouellet said in a statement.

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