

Italy sending planes to evacuate nationals from Rwanda

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ROME, April 9 (Reuter) - Italy said on Saturday it had made three C-130 transport planes available to evacuate its nationals from Rwanda, the central African nation where tribal slaughter has left thousands dead.

The three transporters and a total of 80 troops were standing by at the Tuscan base of Pisa, ready to be redeployed to the Kenyan city of Nairobi as soon as requested.

A foreign ministry spokesman said around 190 Italians were believed to be in Rwanda and all were thought to be safe.

"The idea is to make evacuation possible for all our citizens," the spokesman said.

Defence Minister Fabio Fabbri was in constant contact with Belgian and French officials who have set up a coordination centre in Nairobi with their American counterparts, his ministry said in a statement.

"It has been agreed that our planes will be for the use of all citizens who have to be evacuated from the guerrilla zone," the statement said.

France said its troops in Rwanda would begin evacuating nationals from the capital of Kigali on Saturday evening.

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