

Christopher says Americans out of Rwanda, no plans to send in Marines

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WASHINGTON, April 10 (AFP) - Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Sunday that most US nationals have made it safely out of Rwanda, traveling to neighboring Burundi by overland convoy.

Christopher said there were no plans to send the 330 US Marines standing by in Burundi to Rwanda to restore order.

The US embassy operations in Kigali have been suspended and the US ambassador left the country in the last car of the convoy, said Christopher in an interview on NBC television.

No US nationals were injured in the fighting in Kigali, he said.

The situation was "very confused, very tense and very dangerous," Christopher said of the violence that swept Rwanda after its president Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundi's President Cyprien Ntaryamira were killed Wednesday when their plane was apparently hit by groundfire and

crashed.

"I think it's somewhat quieter today in Kigali, the capital, but the rebel forces are said to be only a few hours away from the city. That may well produce another round of fighting."

"It's been a terrible situation with thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of casualties," he said.

He said all 258 Americans in Rwanda have been contacted by the embassy and reported that all who wanted to had left the country in convoys. Several others left independently to Zaire and Tanzania.

"One or two may remain, but by an large, I think the Americans who want to leave will be out by the end of the day or at the latest tomorrow," he said.

"So far as we know, there are no Americans who are unsafe there," he added.

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