

United Nations [Rwanda fighters agree to ceasefire, transitional Government formed]

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UNITED NATIONS, April 8 (AFP) - Fighters in Rwanda have agreed on a ceasefire and have formed a transitional government, said New Zealand's UN Ambassador Colin Keating, the current Security Council chief.

His comments came shortly before the French government announced it was sending in troops to help evacuate foreigners if need be.

"The ceasefire did not take hold immediately, but by all accounts the level of fighting has diminished significantly," according to a UN statement.

Ethnic conflicts in Rwanda have left thousands dead since Wednesday, when an aircraft carrying the presidents of Rwanda and neighboring Burundi crashed and killed both leaders. The dead in subsequent bloodshed included the Rwandan prime minister and 10 UN peacekeepers from Belgium.

The ceasefire went into effect Friday at 4:00 p.m. in Kigali local time, the United Nations said in a statement.

"An agreement has been reached on a ceasefire," said Keating, who said there had been a "significant improvement in the security situation."

The United Nations said that a crisis committee made up of army and police had named a new interim president, former Parliament head Theodore Sindikubwabo, to step into the vacuum left by the death of President Juvenal Habyarimana in a plane crash. He was killed along with President Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi.

The ceasefire was mediated by Cameroon's Jacques-Roger Booh Booh, the UN special representative for Rwanda.

The new prime minister will be Jean Kambanda of the Republican Democratic Movement. Five other ministers were also chosen - one

other from the Republican Democratic Movement and two each from the Social Democratic Party and Liberal Party.

The United Nations contacted the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and is awaiting their reaction.

The UN mission in Rwanda has scheduled a meeting in the Rwandan capital Kigali on Saturday in hopes of cementing the accord, the UN statement said. The rebels had signed a peace accord with the government in August in Arusha, Tanzania.

"The representative of the RPF assured me that he had been advised by his headquarters that their forces would remain at the demilitarised zone and would not seek to advance on Kigali," said Keating.

"If that improvement trend continues, we hope that it would be possible for (the UN mission) to continue and fulfill its existing mandate if the situation deteriorates drastically we will have to assess in the light of the situation that prevails," he added.

If, however, the situation deteriorates, he said the council would remain apprised of the situation.

Earlier Friday, UN Secretary

General Boutros Boutros-Ghali asked the Security Council to make emergency plans to evacuate all UN civilian personnel in the east African country, if necessary.

The United States said it was closing its embassy in the capital Kigali and planning to evacuate 250 American citizens in Rwanda.

Belgian officials said their military had been instructed to draw up plans for a military evacuation of the approximately 1,500 Belgian nationals in Rwanda.

In a letter to the UN Security Council Friday, U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali requested a substantial increase in the number of UN peacekeepers in Rwanda to aid in a possible evacuation of UN civilian personnel and foreigners.

If UN peacekeepers are called on to aid in evacuations, nearly 2,000 additional troops will be needed to back up the 2,500 already there.

Peacekeepers had been sent to Rwanda to monitor a peace agreement signed in August to end a civil war between the government and Rwandan Patriotic Front.

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