

More French troops heading for Kigali

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PARIS, April 9 (AFP) - A further 120 French soldiers are to join French troops who have secured the airport at Kigali, the Rwandan capital, amid preparations to evacuate French nationals in the strife-torn city, the military chief of staff said Saturday.

Admiral Jacques Lanxade said that the extra troops dispatched from France's base in Central African Republic were due to arrive late Saturday in Kigali, bringing the total number of French soldiers there to 400.

In the Chinese city of Shanghai, French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said that France "has taken steps" to evacuate 600 French nationals in Rwanda after the killing of a French couple in the eastern African country.

Some 40 Belgian soldiers serving

with the UN were deployed at Kigali airport to assist with the landing of French soldiers there, the Belgian defence ministry said Saturday.

The airport was secured in the early hours of Saturday after two days of ethnic bloodletting which has left thousands dead following the plane crash death of president Juvenal Habyarimana.

Belgium, the former colonial power, is coordinating efforts with France and Deputy Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo, interviewed on Belgian radio, confirmed that military planes had left Belgium to protect the estimated 1,500 Belgians stranded in Rwanda.

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