

[Rwanda: ceasefire agreed, transitional government formed]

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

"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 reportedly left thousands dead since Wednesday, when an aircraft carrying the presidents of Rwanda and neighboring Burundi crashed and killed both leaders.

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 im-

provement in the security situation."

The warring sides have chosen a president, prime minister and five ministers to be a part of an interim government, said Keating.

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.

Six ministers, among them a prime minister, was chosen, two from each of the parties: Republican Democratic Movement, Social Democratic Party and Liberal Party.

The United Nations contacted the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front and is awaiting their reaction. The rebels had signed an agreement with the government in August in Arusha, Tanzania.

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.

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.

Rwanda was on the verge of civil war Friday as battles with heavy

weapons raged in Kigali.

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. Ten Belgian UN soldiers were killed Thursday.

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