

EXCISE

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Rwanda: Update



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The RPF yesterday rejected a new UNAMIR-brokered cease-fire due to take effect in Kigali at 0600 local time today, according to press reports. RPF leaders said two 600-man battalions, backed by two more battalions, were 10 kilometers north of Kigali and advancing. The RPF has been infiltrating government lines and reassembling behind them, according to EUCOM.

Comment: Despite Museveni's consistent denials, Uganda has given the RPF military support since it began the civil war in 1990. Kagame, a Tutsi who headed Ugandan military intelligence before taking over the RPF, served closely with Museveni in Uganda's civil war. Libya provided military and financial aid to the RPF in late 1990 and early 1991, but since then we have seen no evidence of such support. The RPF will probably defeat regime forces in Kigali but will have great difficulty restoring order among a hostile Hutu populace.

Evacuation continues; Belgian difficulties. Nearly all the 600 French nationals and UN civilian employees have been evacuated, according to Embassy Paris and USUN. French troops are evacuating third-country nationals and probably will begin pulling out in the next 48 hours.

Belgian defense ministry spokesmen yesterday said 300 of 1,500 Belgian citizens in Rwanda had left, according to press reports. Heavily escorted Belgian convoys late yesterday began shuttling foreigners to the airport through crowds of hostile Rwandans after the government apparently reversed its earlier refusal to grant the 1,000 newly deployed Belgian troops permission to leave the airport.

Dept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir.
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Comment: The French will become increasingly uncomfortable evacuating foreign nationals, especially if the anti-French RPF increases its strength in the area. Anti-Belgian passions among Hutus will continue to hamper evacuation efforts.

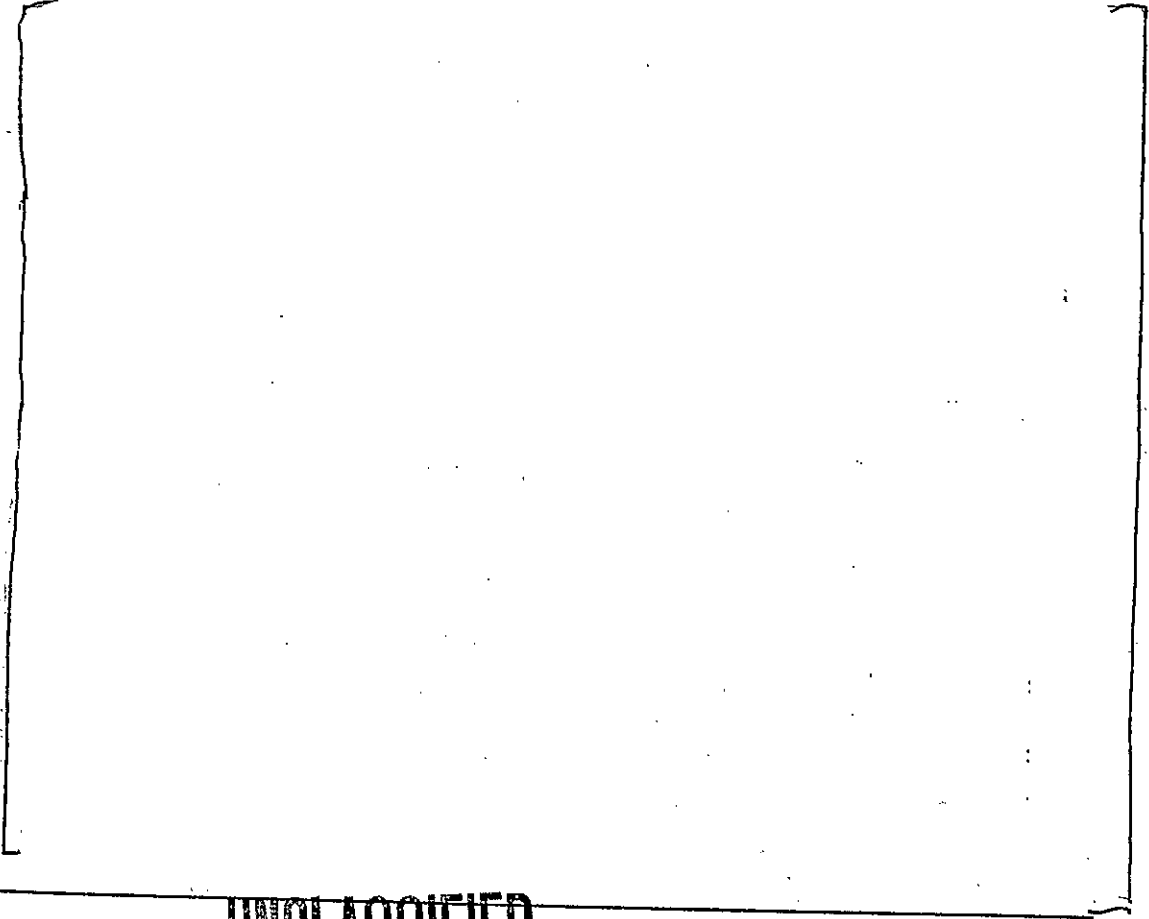
What next for UNAMIR? The Belgians are considering withdrawing their 450 troops from UNAMIR because of concern for their safety, according to USUN; the Senegalese and Congolese may follow suit. UNAMIR troops are guarding some 14,000 Rwandan civilians in Kigali at a hospital and the stadium. Few believe UNAMIR would be able to function without the Belgians.

Comment: If, as appears probable, chaos continues when the French and Belgian national forces pull out, UNAMIR forces – especially the Belgians – will be in considerable danger. With last summer's peace accord in tatters, the original justification for the UNAMIR mandate no longer holds. But a sudden pullout could lead to a bloodbath involving the civilians UNAMIR is protecting. Though a different UN force might be able to play a positive role after the dust settles, anti-Belgian sentiment would limit Belgians' effectiveness in a UN role.

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(NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/ORCON)

Ukraine: Clashes



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