

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

07-Apr-1994 20:09 EDT

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MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE BELOW

FROM: Donald K. Steinberg
(STEINBERG)

SUBJECT: Update on Rwanda (8:00 p.m.)

Another update on Rwanda (8:00 EDT)

Our Ambassador in Kigali, David Rawson, reports that things have calmed down somewhat now that night has fallen, but there is still gunfire and occasional shelling in the city. There have been no incidents involving Americans, although at least 11 Belgian military have been killed, along with "vast numbers" of Rwandans. A communication net has been set up for the Americans (who apparently now number 258, with another 30 or so non-American USG contractors), and they are staying hunkered down and in touch every hour. The Army has control of the airport, and have kept it closed. Confirmed dead include the prime minister and the ministers of social affairs, information, and agriculture. Elsewhere in the country, the South is quiet, but there is some fighting in the North.

We have been in touch with the French and the Belgians here and in their capitals to determine their plans. Both apparently are proceeding with planning for possible action in Kigali -- either to evacuate expatriates or stabilize the situation -- but are waiting to see what daylight brings tomorrow. The French have reportedly put their troops in Bangui on alert. There is a meeting tomorrow morning between the French and the Belgians (and possibly EUCOM).

The UNSC is about to have a presidential statement of concern over the violence. ("The Council will remain seized of the matter.") More important is the question of what to do with the U.N. peacekeeping force, especially if the French or Belgians move in. We will have a core group meeting on this question tomorrow.

The State Department is expected to shortly authorize an ordered departure for all American personnel from Kigali. This does not mean that we have yet decided to close everything down, only that preparations are now being made. The Joint Chiefs have ordered Eucom to get ready for a possible evacuation, including an evacuation in which they have to force their way in. The Department has also decided to draw dependents out of Burundi as a precaution, although all remains calm there for now.

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President Clinton's statement from this morning has gotten substantial press coverage. He has not been asked about the situation directly. There have been some questions to State Department about the whereabouts of Monique, the human rights monitor. We are still trying to reach her.

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