

RWANDA

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

08-Apr-1994 07:24 EDT

UNCLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE BELOW

FROM: Donald K. Steinberg
(STEINBERG)

SUBJECT: Update on Kigali

UPDATE 4 (7:20 am, 4/7)

Tony/Sandy:

First, I think it's worth considering having the President make a very brief call out to our Ambassador in Kigali, David Rawson. He has been doing a great job of keeping the 280 or so Americans there safe and in contact with each other, and planning for the evacuation. Even a two-minute call from the President would really help buck up the spirits of the entire community out there through a very harrowing time.

There continues to be fighting in the streets of Kigali, primarily inter-ethnic and largely between the current military and the RPF of the former regime. Civil authority has completely broken down. 17 Rwandan Jesuits priests and nuns have been killed, as have many Rwandan workers for international relief agencies, including UNICEF. The UN commander on the ground has been trying to get the military commanders together, but to no avail so far. Brussels has put its paratroopers in the region on alert, as are the French troops in Bangui for a possible evacuation or pacification effort. EUCOM is meeting with the French and Belgians in Brussels to discuss joint evacuation efforts -- Belgium is seeking our airlift support, and State has contacted Defense to see what can be done.

We have ordered the departure of our personnel from Kigali, but that will not be easy to accomplish, considering the fighting in the streets and the continued closure of the airport. The Embassy in Kigali is considering two possible plans: South by land to Kigali or forced exit via the airport. Neither is a good plan. For now, it is best that they continue to hunker down.

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