

# OAU accuses United Nations of abandoning Rwanda

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ADDIS ABABA, April 22 (Reuter) - The Organisation of African Unity accused the United Nations on Friday of abandoning the people of Rwanda by slashing the number of peacekeepers in their tormented country.

In a statement, OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim said the decision to cut U.N. forces revealed a lack of concern for Africa when the world body was increasingly involved elsewhere.

"The U.N. decision to pull out troops from Rwanda is a sign of a lack of sufficient concern for an African tragic situation.

"This is particularly so when account is taken of the fact that the United Nations is increasingly involved in situations affecting peace and security in other regions", Salim added.

Salim's statement added to criticism from African diplomats at what they see as a double standard in reducing U.N. forces in Rwanda and bolstering U.N. involvement in the former Yugoslavia.

The Security Council voted unanimously on Thursday to cut its peacekeeping force in Rwanda to a bare minimum of 270. The U.N. Assistance Mission in Rwanda strength was 2,500 before fighting erupted on April 6.

The council pledged to consider promptly any recommendations to increase the force and mandate, depending on developments.

Salim said the U.N. decision was particularly disheartening as it was made when the OAU and African states were pushing to halt massacres and secure a ceasefire in Rwanda to end the crisis which was triggered by the killing of the Rwandan president.

"I am also disheartened by the U.N. decision to abandon the people of Rwanda...taken in spite of the appeal from Africa to the Security Council to maintain an effective U.N. presence in the country," he said.

He said the U.N. troop cut disregarded persistent appeals by relief and humanitarian agencies for increased U.N. involvement to ensure the continued delivery of humanitarian assistance to Rwandans.

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