

## U.S. positions forces for Kigali evacuation

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BONN, April 9 (Reuter) - The United States has deployed about 330 Marines and seven military aircraft to Burundi to deal with any eventual evacuation of U.S. citizens from the Rwandan capital Kigali, a U.S. Navy spokesman said on Saturday.

U.S. Navy Captain Gordon Peterson, spokesman for the U.S. European Command, said four C-141 transport aircraft had also been deployed to Mombasa, Kenya.

“As a precautionary measure in reaction to the escalation of the fighting in Rwanda, the United States European Command is deploying two companies of U.S. Marines, some 330 personnel, to Bujumbura,” Peterson told Reuters.

“We have had no reports of specific threats against U.S. citizens but due to the sharp escalation in fighting we have pre-positioned aircraft in the event an evacuation becomes likely,” he added.

He said four KC-130 aircraft and three CH-53 helicopters had been sent to Bujumbura, capital of Burundi, and were expected to arrive within the next few hours. He added the U.S. State Department estimated that there were between 200 and 250 American citizens in Rwanda.

France and Belgium sent troops to Rwanda on Saturday to prepare for an airlift of foreigners as the country lurched towards all-out civil war following two days of tribal bloodletting.

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