

Belgium urges stronger security for UN presence in Rwanda

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BRUSSELS, April 8 (AFP) - Belgium has urged the United Nations to urgently step up the security of UN personnel in Rwanda, the government said here Friday in a communique after a crisis session of senior cabinet ministers.

The communique, issued after a four-hour meeting, said measures had been decided to guarantee the security of Belgian nationals in Rwanda, where bloody ethnic clashes have raged since Wednesday.

But government officials would give no details. One official cited "security reasons" for the lack of information.

The government expressed its "indignation" at the slaying of 10 Belgian members of the UN Assistance Force in Rwanda on Thursday after they tried unsuccessfully to prevent the murder of the Rwandan prime

minister.

The communique said: "The government is extremely concerned at the deterioration of the situation on the ground, and particularly threats (to the safety) of our countrymen.

"It has therefore decided measures to guarantee the security of Belgian nationals," the communique added.

The government said a crisis centre had been set up at the Belgian Foreign Affairs Ministry here.

It said Prime Minister Jean-Luc Dehaene and Foreign Minister Willy Claes had expressed to UN Secretary-general Boutros Boutros-Ghali the "urgent need" to reinforce the security of UN forces in Rwanda.

"The secretary-general fully shares this preoccupation," the communique said.

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