

France hints at intervention if Rwanda ceasefire fails

AFP, 15 juin 1994

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137 Mots

15 Juin 1994

Agence France-Presse

Anglais

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PARIS, June 15 (AFP) – France could intervene to stop the ethnic bloodshed in Rwanda if the latest ceasefire there fails, Foreign Minister Alain Juppe said Wednesday, adding that other countries may also be involved.

France "would be ready to mount an intervention operation ... with its European partners or African countries to protect groups threatened with extermination," he said.

He said such an operation could take place "without delay" if a ceasefire reached Tuesday between the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front and interim government forces were not respected.

The question of French intervention was discussed at a Cabinet meeting Wednesday, Juppe added, without giving details of what such intervention might involve.

Ethnic conflict in the central African country has left hundreds of thousands of dead.