

French evacuation completed Monday, forces to pull out soon

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PARIS, April 11 (AFP) - The evacuation of 600 French nationals in war-torn Rwanda will be completed Monday, French Foreign Ministry spokesman Catherine Colonna said Monday.

French officials meanwhile said that the French paratroops sent to Rwanda would pull out very quickly and may start to withdraw on Tuesday.

Colonna stressed that the paratroopers' mission was "purely humanitarian" and aimed only at evacuating French nationals. She added that other foreign nationals would also be allowed to leave on Monday's two flights.

Earlier Monday French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe called for a "re-launch of the process of dialogue" between the warring parties, the majority Hutu tribe and the minority Tutsis in the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).

Speaking on French radio, Juppe said France would "do its utmost" in cooperation with Rwanda's neighbours, the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations to find a political solution to the conflict.

On Sunday, French Development Aid Minister Michel Roussin said French forces would leave Rwanda as soon as the evacuation was complete and they would not "get mixed up" in the Rwandan fighting. He said it was up to "the UN to assume its responsibilities."

The rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front has warned the 280 French soldiers in Kigali not to get involved in the Rwandan crisis.

On Monday, Roussin expressed fears for the fate of three missing French military advisors. "We have no certain proof of their deaths, but every hour that goes by makes me fear for the worst," Roussin said.

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