

French soldiers securing Kigali airport

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PARIS, April 9 (AFP) - Some 280 French soldiers were securing Kigali airport in the early hours of Saturday, the French defence ministry announced.

The soldiers were landed by military transport planes and were taking control of the airport buildings at around 0300 GMT, the ministry said.

Fighters in Rwanda had earlier agreed on a ceasefire and on forming a transitional government, according to New Zealand's UN Ambassador Colin Keating, the current Security Council chief, in New York.

The ceasefire, which was to have

come into force Friday evening, did not take hold immediately, but "by all accounts the level of fighting has diminished significantly," according to a UN statement.

Ethnic conflicts in Rwanda have reportedly left thousands dead since Wednesday, when an aircraft carrying the presidents of Rwanda and neighboring Burundi crashed and killed both leaders. The dead in subsequent bloodshed included the Rwandan prime minister and 10 UN peacekeepers from Belgium.

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