Kigali [Killings of Tutsi civilians continue in Kigali as Belgian troops withdraw and Red Cross seeks to resume operations]

AFP, April 16, 1994

Rebel guerrillas and government soldiers are dug in for a trench war in Kigali and Hutu killing squads continued hacking and clubbing to death Tutsi civilians Friday after the departure of Belgian, French and Italian troops rushed to Rwanda to evacuate foreigners.

The foreign troops left Rwanda as a rebel ultimatum for external forces other than UN peacekeepers to quit or face attacks expired.

The Belgian defence ministry in Brussels said early Saturday that the last of some 900 paratroopers it sent in to help evacuate foreigners left Kigali overnight and the remaining 450 Belgians with UNAMIR were assembled at the airport.

Brussels has said it is also pulling these troops out, but no specific date has been set, the ministry said.

Philippe Gaillard, head of the Red Cross delegation here, said that an ambulance would go out later Saturday to pick up wounded as "a test" of the guarantees, obtained from local officials at a meeting Friday.

The two radio stations operating here broadcast messages Saturday calling on the population to let the Red Cross work unhindered.

"We'll see if the message got through," Gaillard said.

Tens of thousands of Rwandans have fled on foot into neighbouring Burundi, Zaire, Tanzania and Uganda to escape the fighting, creating a regional refugee crisis as aid agencies struggle to set up camps to feed and care for them.

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