

Britain advises its citizens to leave Rwanda

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LONDON, April 10 (Reuter) - Britain said on Sunday that it was advising its nationals in Rwanda to leave the strife-torn country immediately.

The Foreign Office issued the advice through BBC World Service radio and the British High Commission in Kampala, Uganda. It told Britons to find French or Belgian troops to escort them to either Kigali airport or to join convoys heading for Burundi or Tanzania.

"In view of the deterioration of law and order in Rwanda the French authorities are taking measures to evacuate their own and British nationals from the country. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office strongly advises British nationals in Rwanda to leave," a government statement said.

A government official said : "We're expecting all of those who want to leave will get out today. We're liaising closely with the French and Belgians who are bringing people out today."

There are about 65 British missionaries and aid workers working in Rwanda.

Britain's honorary consul, Tony Wood, was preparing to leave his bungalow to join the exodus. He has been under siege since last Thursday and has been keeping in touch with British media by telephone.

Wood said many expatriates were finding the situation threatening with marauding gangs on the streets.

"If they don't get what they want from people, it's curtains. This country is being destroyed and it is a real tragedy," said Wood who has lived in Rwanda since 1968.

"I am not afraid. I have almost reached my allotted two score years and ten and I'm sitting here next door to the home of the Papal Nuncio, hoping he is praying for me," Wood said.

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