

UN Security Council mission to visit Burundi and Rwanda

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UNITED NATIONS, Feb 7 (AFP) - The United Nations Security Council will send a mission to Burundi this week to assess the current wave of social and political unrest there, the current council president, Legwaila Legwaila of Botswana, said Monday.

"We have agreed to send a mission of seven members of the council to Burundi and Kigali," Legwaila said after consultations Monday among the Security Council's 15 members.

Representatives from the seven council members - China, the Czech Republic, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Nigeria and the United States - will leave Wednesday and will arrive in Bujumbura Friday.

Before their scheduled departure Saturday, the UN mission will consult with "government officials and all other interested parties," Legwaila said.

Growing social and political tension between the Tutsis and Hutus threaten to plunge the central African highland nation into civil war as happened in neighboring Rwanda, where hundreds of thousands of minority Tutsis were slaughtered last year.

Before returning here next week, the Security Council mission will also meet with government officials in Kigali, Legwaila said.

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