

U.N. to send peacekeeping force to Rwanda

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UNITED NATIONS, March 12 (AFP) - The U.N. Security Council Friday will vote on sending an international military contingent to enforce a ceasefire between government and rebel forces in Rwanda, diplomatic sources said.

A draft resolution drawn up by France would call on U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to consult with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to determine what role the United Nations can play to reinforce the peace process in Rwanda.

The resolution recommends deploying an international military force to the small, land-locked African nation.

Under joint U.N.-OAU sponsorship such a force would protect the civilian population, ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid, monitor the four-day-old ceasefire.

The former Belgian colony has been wracked by civil war for more than two years and more than one

million people have been forced to flee their homes.

The Security Council resolution calls on the Kigali government, of the majority Hutus tribe, and the mainly Tutsi rebels of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR) to abide by the ceasefire and allow the distribution of relief supplies and the return of all refugees.

Both parties signed a ceasefire agreement Sunday in Dar Es Salaam which calls for replacing foreign troops in Rwanda with an international force under a U.N.-OAU mandate.

France stepped up its military presence in Rwanda after the FPR launched a major new offensive on February 8. Some 700 French troops have been deployed to protect 400 French nationals.

The draft resolution that was approved during consultations by the 15-member council also calls on Boutros-Ghali to look into a request by Rwanda and Uganda to have their common border put under international surveillance.

The council would call on Kigali and the FPR to abide by their agreement and go back to the negotiating table March 15 to settle their differences and sign a peace agreement by the end of April at the latest.”

The U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) said it has stepped up food aid to Rwanda to some 235 tonnes,

flown daily to Kigali from neighbouring Uganda. It said about 15,000 tonnes of food a month were needed for the displaced people, estimated to number between 850,000 and a million.

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