U.N. chief says quick decision needed on Rwanda

Reuters, April 13, 1994

BONN, April 13 (Reuter) - U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said on Wednesday the Security Council must decide soon what to do in Rwanda in order to avoid a spillover of the conflict into neighbouring Burundi.

Boutros-Ghali said the Council was looking into several options on how to defuse the conflict, in which the rebel Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) appeared to be tightening its grip on Kigali, the Rwandan capital.

"I hope the council will take a decision so that we will be able to continue our mission in Rwanda, try to contain the confrontation and avoid that this confrontation could move from Rwanda to Burundi," he told reporters after meeting German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel.

Boutros-Ghali said one option was to keep in place the 2,500-strong U.N. Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), dispatched last year to help implement an accord signed in Arusha, Tanzania, by the Rwandan government and the RPF.

He said the United Nations might "add additional troops (to) replace the Belgian troops in case they would withdraw".

Belgian radio said on Wednesday that Boutros-Ghali had agreed Belgium could withdraw its 420-strong contingent of U.N. peacekeepers.

The radio said the U.N. chief would still like a formal decision from the council, adding it could meet on Wednesday.

(c) Reuters Limited 1994