[Belgium announces withdrawal of its UN peacekeepers from Rwanda]

AFP, April 14, 1994

BRUSSELS, April 14 (AFP) - Belgium's 400-strong contingent in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda will not remain there "under any circumstances", Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes said here Thursday.

Citing a "virulent" anti-Belgian mood in Rwanda, he said the Belgian peacekeepers would leave no matter what the UN Security Council decided to do later Thursday with its mission there.

Belgium is the former colonial power in the war-ravaged central African state.

Claes told a press conference: "We have decided to withdraw the Belgian troops from the UN contingent. Their peace-keeping mission no longer makes sense."

Ten Belgian members of the UN mission were slaughtered by the Rwandan presidential guard in Kigali on Thursday last week after trying unsuccessfully to stop the murder of Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingyamana.

Claes said: "We believe that the Security Council would show great wisdom if it decided (at a meeting later Thursday) to suspend its peacekeeping mission."

He added: "There is a virulent anti-Belgian climate (in Rwanda). The climate is such that we cannot take the responsibility of adding to the risk run by our soldiers, and the UN soldiers of other countries.".

Altogether the United Nations has about 2,300 soldiers and 300 observers in Rwanda from 23 countries. Nearly 1,000 are from bangladesh and 840 from Ghana.

Belgian troops and civilians became the victims of an anti-Belgian hate campaign during the last week of carnage in Rwanda, because of Belgium's policy of neutrality.

Belgium was accused by members

of the interim government and its Hutu supporters of supporting the rebel, mainly-Tutsi, Rwandan Patriotic Front.

The Belgian foreign minister said that the UN force had been powerless to stop the massacre of tens of thousands of Rwandans and other nationalities and that the situation in Rwanda was becoming increasingly chaotic.

But he said the pull-out of Belgian peacekeepers did not mean that Belgium was ending humanitarian aid and other forms of cooperation with Rwanda.

Rwanda was part of the Belgian UN trusteeship of Rwanda-Burundi before it became independent in 1962.

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