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94

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2

Shelf:

11

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2

YEMEN: FIGHTING, ORDERED DEPARTURE, EVACUATION

Q: Update on fighting? Is this civil war? What do we think about the declared state of emergency? What happens next?

A: WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE FIGHTING HAS INTENSIFIED.

WHILE THE U.S. IS NOT AN OFFICIAL MEDIATOR, WE ARE

Extended Page 1.1

**WHILE THE U.S. IS NOT AN OFFICIAL MEDIATOR, WE ARE
USING OUR GOOD OFFICES TO PROMOTE A CESSATION OF
HOSTILITIES AND A RESUMPTION OF A POLITICAL DIALOGUE
TOWARD A PEACEFUL, NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT TO
YEMEN'S PROBLEMS. THE MILITARY OPTION IS NOT A
SOLUTION.**

**WE ARE ALSO WORKING WITH OTHER STATES IN THE REGION
TO URGE THE YEMENIS TO END THE FIGHTING.**

Q: Are you reducing your Embassy staff in Yemen?

**A: THE UNDER SECRETARY FOR MANAGEMENT HAS ORDERED A
REDUCTION OF EMBASSY STAFF IN SANA'A. DEPENDENTS
AND NON-ESSENTIAL STAFF MUST DEPART. THE
AMBASSADOR AND A SMALL NUMBER OF PERSONNEL WILL
STAY AND THE EMBASSY WILL REMAIN OPEN.**

(Note to briefer: about 25 will stay)

Rwanda

Background

The situation in Rwanda continues to deteriorate with reports of more than 100,000 deaths in largely communal violence. The rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) continues to make gains in fighting and has taken over parts of Kigali. There are mass flows of refugees toward Zaire, Uganda and Tanzania. The UN has drawn down its force (UNAMIR) to 270 soldiers; we and others have insisted this drawdown not threaten lives of Rwandans under their protection.

Peace talks in Arusha and elsewhere have not gotten off the ground and RPF and government forces refuse to meet. Our ambassadors in Tanzania and Uganda are deeply involved. On May 5, Ass't Sec Shattuck met with OAU SGY Salim Salim.

We announced \$15 million in new humanitarian assistance funds for Burundi and Rwanda to support humanitarian assistance programs.

Points

- The blood-letting in Rwanda since the plane crash four weeks ago has been tragic and almost inconceivable. While our capacity to end the killing is painfully limited, we are taking a series of measures.
- We are continuing to work with the regional leaders, especially President Mwinyi of Tanzania and Museveni of Uganda, to shore up their efforts at resolving the crisis. New talks are scheduled for Tuesday in Arusha.
- Assistant Secretary of State John Shattuck and Ambassador Rawson ~~will leave soon (probably tomorrow)~~ ^{are in} for the region, including Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania to shore up the regional leaders' efforts to achieve peace and protect refugees in Rwanda. The UN Commission for Human Rights is sending a team to the region to investigate the current abuses.
- A team from our embassy in Tanzania is travelling to the border with Rwanda to assess the current situation and make recommendations for new assistance.