

Khmer Rouge refuses to release U.N. peacekeepers

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia — Khmer Rouge guerrillas refused Wednesday to release six unarmed U.N. peacekeepers, escalating tensions that threaten an accord on ending Cambodia's 13-year civil war.

U.N. officials said a helicopter sent to look for the truce monitors was hit by gunfire, and a French officer on the craft suffered a back wound.

"This is very unfortunate and very surprising," U.N. spokesman Eric Falt said. "Certainly the eyes of the world, the international community, are going to be looking at this episode very carefully. I'm sure (the Khmer Rouge) understands that it will have repercussions."

In another development, Falt said

six U.N. police were wounded Wednesday when their vehicles ran over newly laid anti-tank mines on a road near Siem Reap, 140 miles northwest of Phnom Penh. He said Khmer Rouge and government troops both operate in the area, so it was unclear who laid the mines.

The U.N. Security Council voted Monday to impose economic sanctions on the Khmer Rouge for refusing to disarm under terms of the peace accord they signed a year ago with Cambodia's government and two other rebel groups.

The Khmer Rouge also have refused to give U.N. monitors unrestricted access to the 10 percent to 20 percent of the countryside they con-

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rol, and its leaders are boycotting the U.N. effort to organize democratic elections in May.

Further undermining the U.N. mission is a surge of political violence in the past month aimed at opposition politicians and their families. Many people blame the government, which denies responsibility.

But the main fear is that the civil

war could erupt again because of the worsening relations between the Khmer Rouge and the 22,000 U.N. peacekeepers and officials sent to carry out the peace accord.

Khmer Rouge leaders accuse the U.N. mission of working with Vietnam, whose army ousted the Khmer Rouge in 1979 after a bloody reign that tried to turn Cambodia into an

agrarian commune. The Khmer Rouge have allegedly fired on at least a dozen U.N. helicopters recently, but no U.N. soldiers have been killed.

The detained peacekeepers—three Britons, two Filipinos and a New Zealander—were seized Tuesday at a Khmer Rouge checkpoint on the Stoeng Sen River in central Cambodia while monitoring troop movements from a boat, Falt said.

Falt said U.N. military officials in Phnom Penh tried to get a Khmer Rouge official to travel to Kompong Thom with them to negotiate a release, but the request was rejected.

"We, at this stage, are gravely concerned," Falt said Wednesday night.

President-elect plans inaugural bash, bus trip

WASHINGTON — President-elect Clinton will start his inaugural celebration with a trademark bus trip and end it with a White House open house, mixing invitation-only affairs with lots of free events for ordinary Americans, organizers said Wednesday.

Clinton wants "an open inaugural, an accessible inaugural and a dignified inaugural," said Democratic National Committee Chairman Ronald H. Brown, who also chairs the Presidential Inaugural Committee.

The five days of festivities — running Jan. 17-21 — will cost less than \$20 million, paid for by private contributions and sales of tickets and souvenirs, Brown said.

There will be at least eight free events, including a concert and fireworks at the Lincoln Memorial, an outdoor festival nearby on the Capital mall, as well as several events aimed at young people.

Clinton will cap Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, with 10 invitation-only, black-tie balls for about 65,000 people. Tickets will sell for \$125.

The decision to begin the festivities outside the capital was designed to show the inaugural is not just a Washington insiders' affair, committee members said.

"It is not just meant to signify what touched the American people during the course of the campaign but to really touch American history and the fact that it is more than just what happens in Washington but how we bring our nation and our people together," said Brown.

When Clinton arrives in Washington, he will go to the Lincoln Memorial for a public concert and fireworks. Like Clinton, both Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln were presidents "at a time when government and the people were estranged," noted Rahm Emanuel, the committee's co-director.

The day after his swearing in, Clinton and his wife, Hillary, will wind up the inaugural festivities by welcoming the public to the White House.

"We hope that as many people as can fit show up," said spokesman George Stephanopoulos, from transition headquarters in Little Rock, Ark.

U.N. to oversee troops in Somalia

UNITED NATIONS — U.S. military commanders will have to give up the free rein they had in the Persian Gulf War and accept some U.N. oversight of troops in Somalia, diplomats said Wednesday.

But a U.S. draft resolution for the Security Council leaves the door open for a U.S. general to command a proposed American force in the famine-ravaged nation. Diplomats also said daily operations would probably be left to field commanders.

"The United States is likely to be commanding the operation," Sir David Hannay, Britain's ambassador, told reporters on Tuesday. Pentagon sources have said 12,000 to 20,000 U.S. troops might be sent to Somalia to get food to more than 1 million Somalis threatened by starvation. The Bush administration had offered up to 30,000 troops.

An international relief operation has been hamstrung by feuding Somali warlords and bandits in the lawless East African nation. The State Department says 1,000 people in So-

American expedition worries some African nations, China

malia are dying every day of starvation and disease. The death toll already exceeds 300,000.

The draft resolution is part of a compromise Washington is forging to win the support of China, which has threatened to veto a free-wheeling U.S.-led operation. African nations are also worried about U.S. domination of their continent.

The compromise was one of the issues to be discussed in a closed-door Security Council meeting Wednesday.

The Pentagon had sought complete control over its forces, including the right to decide when to withdraw. But U.S. diplomats realized it might be opposed by some Security Council members and indicated they would accept some degree of U.N. oversight.

Bosnians battle Serbian tanks outside of besieged Sarajevo

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Fighting raged on the capital's outskirts Wednesday, and all efforts to get food to the besieged city were halted.

Bosnian defenders battled what they said was one of the heaviest Serb tank offensives so far. The worst fighting was in Otes, a suburb north of the airport, where government forces have been under attack for three days by Serb artillery, tanks and mortars.

Bosnian officers claim the Serbs used a Nov. 12 cease-fire, which has since collapsed, to move at least 10 tanks into position to attack Otes from three sides. They said the Serb strategy was to forge a link between Ilidza to the west of Sarajevo and Rajlovac to the northwest.

About 6,000 people live in Otes, many of them refugees from elsewhere. Evacuation is difficult because of sniper fire and a shortage of cars.

The Bosnians reported 14 dead — nine troops and five civilians — and dozens wounded in Wednesday's fighting. They were unsure of Serb casualties.

More than 17,000 people have been killed and 110,000 wounded in a civil war that began after Bosnia's Croat

and Muslim majority voted for independence in February, according to the Bosnian Health Ministry. More than 1 million people have been forced from their homes.

Serb forces, backed by Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, have captured more than 70 percent of Bosnia. Croat forces hold most of the rest.

No food reached embattled Sarajevo on Wednesday. The relief airlift was suspended Tuesday after a U.S. Air Force transport plane was hit by small-arms fire while approaching the airport.

A truck convoy due in the city on Wednesday was held up in Vitez, to the northwest, because of fears of fighting. Officials said relief convoys from Mostar to the southwest also could be delayed because key approaches to Sarajevo were considered too dangerous.

In a related development, a top electoral official in Belgrade said Wednesday that moderate Yugoslav Premier Milan Panic had failed to produce documents qualifying him to run against Serbia's hard-line President Slobodan Milosevic in elections on Dec. 20. Panic, a Serb-born California businessman, had to prove he has been resident in Serbia for a year.

Shuttle Discovery launch caps stellar NASA year

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Discovery safely soared into space with five astronauts and a spy satellite Wednesday after the sun melted dangerous chunks of ice on the shuttle fuel tank.

Nearly 7 1/2 hours into the flight, Mission Control announced that the Pentagon satellite had been successfully released.

The operation was conducted in secrecy. Once completed, NASA lifted a news blackout.

Discovery blasted off on the mission at 8:24 a.m., almost 1 1/2 hours late because of the ice accumulation, a result of unusually cold weather. NASA adopted stricter launch-weather rules after the 1986 Challenger disaster.

Flight plans called for commander David Walker and his crew to release the satellite into a 230-mile-high orbit six hours after liftoff. The Pentagon has refused to identify the payload, citing national security, but space policy analysts believe it is a reconnaissance spacecraft.

It was NASA's eighth and final shuttle launch of the year, the most since 1985. Only one of those flights required more than one launch attempt, and that was just a one-day delay.

But while NASA finally seems to have its act together, funding is down, costs are up, the military will soon stop using shuttles and a White House task force is urging speedy replacement of the fleet.

"The evidence has been building for years and years and years. There's just nothing for them (shuttle astronauts) to do up there, at least nothing that's worth the risk and the cost of putting them up there," said former NASA histo-

rian Alex Roland, now a history professor at Duke University.

But for NASA, hope springs eternal.

"Pretty soon somebody's going to notice that (improving record) and say, 'Shoot, it looks like those folks know what they're doing, maybe this is a good deal we've got going here and maybe it can serve the country for some time in the future,'" deputy shuttle director Brewster Shaw, an ex-astronaut, said Wednesday.

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— Roland
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Although the crew's other orbital work will be conducted in the open, no views of the cargo bay will be allowed during the seven-day flight to protect the identity of the satellite.

Although the temperature briefly dipped to 38 degrees, it was 51 when Discovery blasted off.

The temperature when Challenger lifted off on its doomed flight in 1986 was 36 degrees, the coldest ever for a shuttle launch.

Discovery is scheduled to land Dec. 9 at Kennedy Space Center.

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Editor Chris Hoptensperger
472-1766
Managing Editor Kris Karnopp
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