

absence of (or unwillingness to take) policy decisions that would give appropriate guidance and purpose to a military deployment.

In this case, as the refugees were freed from ex-FAR and Interahamwe coercion and began to return to Rwanda, the international community began to engage in debate over whether the military mission was still required. Those who defined the goals of the military mission as humanitarian noted that there were still, by late December, people in need in Eastern Zaire, and supported the extension of the mission. The problem with the purely humanitarian definition is that there will always be people in need in Eastern Zaire, but the military is not the appropriate tool to address these long-term humanitarian problems, not least because armed forces are not considered by the parties on the ground to be "neutral".

Furthermore, the use of the "humanitarian" label to cover a military mission with significant political ramifications has potentially negative implications for Humanitarian Agencies. The military and the Humanitarian Agencies can become identified with each other, exposing the humanitarian workers to very real physical danger.

Recommendation 12: Military missions, and the success or failure thereof, should be defined in terms of clearly understood military goals in a political context, rather than humanitarian objectives.

Observation 13: By taking the lead of the mission without contributing combat troops, Canada was in a weak military and political position.

In leading the mission without any significant numbers of combat troops, Canada was dependent on other nations to conduct any significant operations. Furthermore, countries are generally reluctant to hand over operational control of combat forces to a lead nation that does not provide combat forces of its own. Despite deploying a large number of forces to the region, Canada never had available the operational capability that would have enabled it to undertake military missions in Zaire on its own, had it wished to do so.

Recommendation 13: The country that takes the lead in an MNF should contribute relevant numbers of combat troops to it.