



fully equipped, and they were withdrawn part-way through the operation. Other contingents were either partially equipped or came with no equipment at all.

Thus hobbled, the UNAMIR team continued to carry out the mandate of the mission to the extent possible. But the situation soon deteriorated into full-scale, ethnically-based civil war. In April, 1994, the slaughter began. In June 1994, the UN Security Council approved a new mandate for the Rwandan operation involving the proposed deployment of 5500 troops. Two months later, only 2500 troops had been provided. The commander of UNAMIR, Major-General Roméo Dallaire, has said:

In Rwanda, the international community's inaction...contributed to the Hutu extremists' belief that they could carry out their genocide...UNAMIR could have saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. As evidence, with the 450 men under my command during this interim, we saved and directly protected over 25,000 people and moved tens of thousands between the combat lines. A force of 5,000 personnel rapidly deployed could have prevented the massacres in the south and west of the country that did not commence in earnest until early May, nearly a month after the start of the war.⁶

Had the UN been able to launch an operation as soon as the Arusha peace agreement was signed, a number of elements which contributed to the later crisis might have been avoided. Moreover, had a UN mission been available to support the UNAMIR operation in an urgent fashion, in April and May, 1994, serious deterioration might have been prevented. The critical lesson of the Rwandan experience is that modest but timely measures can make the difference between a situation which is stable or contained and a humanitarian disaster which has spiralled beyond control.

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The Cost of Failure to Prevent Conflict

Straining budgets, diverting resources from development

Disaster relief, 1983: \$300 million
Disaster relief, 1993: \$3.2 billion
 (current U.S. dollars)

The humanitarian disasters that ensue from conflict have a double-impact on development: first, advances, attained through decades of investment in development can be wiped out in months, as infrastructure is destroyed and human resources fall victim to conflict; second, international assistance is diverted from long-term development assistance that should lead to self-sufficiency, to short-term relief. *In the 1980's, emergency assistance and disaster relief accounted for some US\$300 million, or about 3% of bilateral aid. By 1993, that figure had risen to \$3.2 billion, or over 8%.*

Source: DAC, 1994 Report

Cost-Effectiveness

A number of recent conflict situations have shown that the costs of intervening in a crisis escalate dramatically as intervention is postponed. Once a crisis erupts, it initiates a chain reaction that becomes difficult to control. An initial conflict may spark a refugee problem. The combination of conflict and people on the move may then provoke widespread environmental degradation and contribute to famine (as in Somalia) or to health emergencies (as in Zaire). These new problems add fuel to the fires of conflict, widening