

capacity of its government. We supported the creation of the International Tribunal and will be helping to rehabilitate the judicial system through the efforts of Canadian legal experts and funding from CIDA [the Canadian International Development Agency]. As an additional incentive, Canada encouraged the UNHCR to construct temporary camps in Rwanda to receive the refugees coming from neighbouring countries.

At the Conference, Canada piloted two initiatives adopted by consensus. The first is a letter of support to the President of Burundi, and the second, a declaration supporting the sending of a judicial commission to Burundi to cast light on the events of October 1993. In this regard, Foreign Affairs Minister André Ouellet has just written to the UN Secretary-General forwarding these documents and requesting that he expedite the sending of the international judicial inquiry commission.

The fact that it was possible to hold this conference in the existing climate of violence is something in itself. Extremist elements uncomfortable with a strong international presence did everything they could to prevent it. Not content to call a general strike, they went so far as to fire shots and explode grenades during the Conference. But the international community was not intimidated by these actions, expressing its moral support for the government in place. In some international circles it was hoped that the Conference would be deferred to the end of March for bureaucratic reasons, but Canada insisted it be held earlier, given the urgency of the situation. I personally wrote to the UN Secretary-General's assistant in this regard. I am proud that Canada contributed to the earlier scheduling of this meeting and thus participated in preventive diplomacy measures.

#### **The Canadian Action Plan**

Owing to its special ties with the region, Canada got involved in the crisis at its outset. Like its Western partners, Canada first evacuated its nationals, about 200 in number. It then provided humanitarian and food assistance to the people affected by the crisis through NGOs [non-governmental organizations] and international organizations, and contributed substantially to UNAMIR [United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda] II under the command of Major-General Roméo Dallaire. During the weeks of massacre, Canada called for action by the UN Commission on Human Rights. At the beginning of the Rwanda crisis, seven Canadians lost their lives. Last October, Father Claude Simard was assassinated under mysterious circumstances. We believe he had compiled information on the massacres prejudicial to the culprits. While I was in Rwanda, the Prime Minister promised me a report on this assassination. In the months following the defeat of the government forces, Canada adopted an action plan to ensure better co-ordination of its activities. Minister Ouellet approved a coherent strategy in August 1994, involving efforts by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, CIDA and the