

3.1 Objectives

A national goal, or overarching objective was established through a decision of Cabinet and articulated by the Prime Minister in a press conference on November 12, 1996. Prime Minister Chrétien declared **Canada's intention to take a leadership role in mobilizing a multinational force (MNF) to address increasing tensions and humanitarian risks in Eastern Zaïre**. This provided the *raison d'être* for the mobilization of interdepartmental resources.

Recognizing that Canada, while not a superpower, is "a nation that speaks on the international scene with great moral authority," the Prime Minister committed the country to "urge the United Nations Security Council to pass a resolution mandating a Canadian-led international military force ... to prevent massive famine ... slaughter ... and help create a situation in which parties can work toward a political settlement." Moreover, the issue was defined as "a question of intervention for delivering what is needed in the camps ... not to intervene between belligerents"¹

What Canada wanted to accomplish was the mobilization of the international community to avert a potential disaster in the Great Lakes region. This objective was widely understood and repeated by interviewees, and clearly remained the foundation and focus of the work which ensued.

This study also explored the existence of **DFAIT-specific objectives**, within this national goal. While some felt DFAIT objectives were not distinguishable from the overarching goal, a number of department-specific objectives were brought forward. They are summarized as:

- * Maintain the continuity and integrity of Canadian policy, on Africa specifically, and more generally on peacekeeping and humanitarian aid- policy management
- * Organize and lead the multinational *political* effort - political management
- * Support the Prime Minister and DFAIT Ministerial actions-

¹Press conference, National Press Theatre, Ottawa - November 12, 1996.