

The very "creation" of the MNF had a dramatic effect on the refugee situation, which ironically made effective management of the Force more difficult. The original plan was overtaken by events before it was ever implemented. The swift, unexpected movement of hundreds of thousands of people made management of the MNF even more dependent on accurate information on the numbers, location and needs of the refugees. With half a million refugees across the border into Rwanda by early December, the original MNF of 10,000 soldiers was clearly no longer necessary. The goals of the mandate were being met.

The confused situation on the ground, and the obsolescence of the original plan, made it increasingly possible, and tempting, for the various parties to pursue their various agendas, and to use intelligence as a tool in that pursuit. For example, some NGOs were eager to see the MNF deploy to enable them to deliver assistance. Their estimates of the numbers of people in need were consistently high. Even the media suggested that there was a conscious effort to influence governments by inflating intelligence estimates.

Recommendation 6: The lead nation in an MNF should ensure access to reliable intelligence. This would decrease the dependence on the intelligence provided by other parties, many of which use intelligence as a political tool to influence the course of the mission.

Observation 7: The Humanitarian Agencies and NGOs changed the dynamic on the ground, and had a role in the political process.

We must recognize that the presence and actions of the Humanitarian Agencies in Eastern Zaire had a significant effect on the evolution of the crisis. First, they helped to establish the refugee camps in Eastern Zaire. They then provided food and medicine to the refugees, which, while laudable, perpetuated the problem of large camps of Rwandans in Eastern Zaire. Then, when the civil war broke out in the region, and the agencies were unable to provide aid to those in need, they called for a military intervention to facilitate that access, which precipitated the creation of the MNF.

Furthermore, The Humanitarian Agencies and NGOs had political interests in the region, not unlike governments. These agencies have relationships with parties on the ground and with other national governments, and compete with