
1

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine how the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) managed the November/December, 1996 crisis in the African Great Lakes (AGL) region (also referred to as the Zaire Crisis). Specifically, issues of efficiency and effectiveness are explored to ascertain lessons learned, from which the department can draw in mobilizing for future crisis situations.

This study will complement work currently underway in Corporate Communications Division, the Historical Section (BCCH), who are compiling a comprehensive historical account of the relief effort. Lessons learned, from an interdepartmental perspective were also prepared by the Interdepartmental Task Force (centred in PCO) and, from a military standpoint, by the Department of National Defence (DND).

This study, while focusing more narrowly on the strengths and weaknesses of DFAIT's efforts, was undertaken cooperatively with these other initiatives and benefitted from their work. They served to both inform and affirm the findings and analysis which follow.

The report is organized into three primary thrusts - descriptive, analytical and prescriptive. Following a review of the methodology, the handling of the African Great Lakes Crisis in DFAIT is ***profiled***. This provides a summary description of what was done in this department. Next, a more substantive ***analysis*** of the issues is undertaken, focusing on key management issues arising during the inquiry process. Finally, a synthesis of ***lessons learned*** is provided, and accompanied by study conclusions.