

evolving situation in Eastern Zaire for quite some time. As of October 1996, GAFX called regular interdepartmental briefings to follow and discuss the changing situation in light of Canada's foreign policy for the African Great Lakes region. In so doing, Posts and GAF/GAFX had set the ground for its readiness.

- The functional stream's readiness lay in its past experiences at crisis management and at dealing, in an urgent manner, with international fora, systems and mechanisms. The interview process revealed however that only a few people in the functional stream had, prior to November 10th, a fair sense of the scope and character of the mounting crisis in the Great Lakes region.

DFAIT is in the privileged position of taking a wide view of foreign political and economic issues given its mandate to track, in light of Canada's foreign policy, ever-changing international conjunctures. Its wide-angle view enables it to develop an understanding of international issues and occurrences from a broader perspective than one driven by specific instruments and/or a more focused mandate.

DND and CIDA, to wit, both have analytic capabilities enabling them to make sense of international events and dynamics, and appropriately so, in perspectives relevant to their respective mandates and instruments. Their contributions to an international initiative, such as the AGL operation, thus requires a strong sense of context with regards to both the field and the international community, as well as to strategic and operational concerns other than their own. Their contributions also need to be rallied into a common Canadian effort.

DFAIT's broad terrain is thus an ideal arena from which to establish critical linkages with and between other departments' strengths, concerns and operations. Interviewees agreed that therein lies the essence of DFAIT's added value.

The African Great Lakes crisis gave the Department an opportunity to show that it is up to this task. Our informants were unanimous in recognizing DFAIT's aptitude at bridging political, humanitarian and military concerns, and in acknowledging its success in so doing during this crisis.