

### 3. DYSFUNCTIONAL DESIGNS:

DFAIT employs a number of highly qualified and professional interior designers. These individuals are tasked with developing and monitoring the image portrayed in Canada's Chanceries and Official Residences abroad. Unfortunately, some DFAIT personnel criticize the designers for ignoring the suggestions of the people who actually have to live, work and entertain within the rooms they design. This, it has been argued, has led to the design of rooms that are functionally ineffective. For example, there have been cases when designers have created picture-perfect rooms incorporating fluffy, thick wool sofas in countries whose tropical climates dictate the use of solid, cool furniture. Similarly, designers have been criticized for misdirecting their focus on creating an indoor ambience when the primary area of entertaining at the Official Residence is outdoors.

By not discussing their design ideas with those at the Mission, designers not only run the risk of creating impractical designs, but also of creating politically, culturally and socio-economically insensitive ones.

### 4. EXTERNAL CONTRACTORS:

When DFAIT contracts with architects and interior designers to work on building or modifying missions, these contractors must work within the bounds of the standards and regulations in effect. Since DFAIT lacks clearly defined standards and guidelines for the image of its public areas, these contractors are given free reign to determine what image will be presented - and at what cost. Unfortunately, if the image standards are not clearly defined before commencement of the contract, the contractor may have the legal justification to ensure his/her image design is accepted.

### 5. ASSORTED FURNITURE:

Even though DFAIT has MATs, etc. which define the appropriate type, style and display of furniture and fixtures for each Chancery and Official Residence, in actuality the type and style of furniture varies widely between and within missions. This has two unfortunate and costly consequences. First of all, when DFAIT wants/needs to transfer furniture between missions it may not be able to do so. In the interest of maintaining design consistency, new furniture is often required because the existing inventory is unsuitable - it may be a different colour, style, era, etc. This is costly. On the other hand, design consistency may be waved in the interest of cost thereby leaving Canadian Missions with a mish-mash of furniture of different material, colour, era, etc. This does not project a very organized image.