

News Release

Minister for
External Relations
and International
Development



Communiqué

Ministre des
Relations extérieures
et du développement
international

No. 240

October 28, 1991

SUSPENSION OF BILATERAL AID TO ZAÏRE

The Minister for External Relations and International Development, the Honourable Monique Landry, has expressed deep regret at the collapse of order in Zaïre, the pillaging, the loss of innocent lives and the exodus of foreigners, including Canadians.

"Given the current state of insecurity, I have decided to suspend the bilateral co-operation program," said Mrs. Landry. Its resumption is conditional on renewed stability and the establishment of a government that respects human rights. In the meantime, Canada will provide humanitarian assistance and will continue to work through the non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

For some time now, Canadian co-operation has been delivered through Zaïre's NGOs. It has sought essentially to provide assistance at the grass-roots level, where the people are among the world's poorest.

"Canadians are deeply distressed by the situation in Zaïre. I urge those involved to take swift action to form a crisis government to prepare for a transition to democracy and set in motion the reforms essential to the country's recovery," said Mrs. Landry.

Since the outbreak of this crisis, Canada has been in constant communication with friendly governments. Canada fully supports the steps taken by the European Economic Community and its Member States to restore peace in Zaïre.

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