

doc
CA1
EA
97L24
ENG

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ZAIRE MISSION

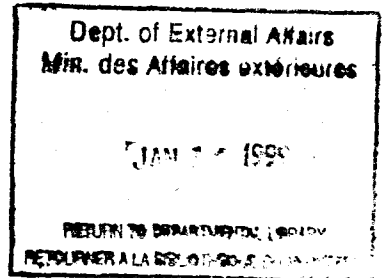


by
James Appathurai
and
Ralph Lysyshyn

June 1997

b287670X(E)

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ZAIRE MISSION



5 157 6343

by
James Appathurai
and
Ralph Lysyshyn

June 1997

PREFACE

One feature of the post-Cold War world has been an increasing reliance on the use of armed forces in the international community's efforts to address humanitarian emergencies, particularly in providing security and support for the delivery of emergency relief assistance in conflict situations. At the Lisbon Summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe on 2 December 1996, Canada's Prime Minister the Right Honourable Jean Chrétien identified the need to learn from the way that such crises have been handled in the past, thinking particularly about the events then unfolding in Zaire. The ultimate goal of the Prime Minister's initiative is to enhance the capacity of, and improve the management of, the international community's use of the military in response to international humanitarian crises.

It is clear that, if we are going to do things better in the future, we need to seriously examine what was done wrong in the past. This process of improvement must begin with a dialogue among governmental and non-governmental experts, which seeks to identify and understand the lessons that the past can teach. The following report was drafted to assist in this learning process. An earlier draft of this report was discussed at a workshop of international experts held in Toronto in April of this year and subsequently refined.

The views presented in this report are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Department of National Defence, or of the Government of Canada.

LEXICON

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency (Government body)
DND	Department of National Defence (Canada)
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Canada)
MNF	Multinational Force
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization, e.g. CARE
PCO	Privy Council Office: the Secretariat to the Cabinet and the body charged with coordinating the activities of the Canadian Government during the Zaire operation.
ROE	Rules of Engagement: directions issued by competent military authority which delineate the circumstances and limitations within which armed force may be applied to achieve military objectives in furtherance of national policy. ROE clearly define the degree and manner in which force may be applied.
Steering Group	Political body created to provide direction to the operation. It comprised all the potential troop- contributing nations, the principal Humanitarian Agencies and major financial donors.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE ZAIRE MISSION

By James Appathurai and Ralph Lysyshyn —

INTRODUCTION

The recent crisis in the Great Lakes region of Central Africa was the latest in a series of humanitarian emergencies in which armed forces were called upon to facilitate the delivery of aid in dangerous environments. While each operation is unique, an examination of the Zaire mission suggests that countries such as Canada are in some ways well placed to lead the formation of certain multinational military coalitions. The operation also revealed, however, the difficulties involved in managing military operations in humanitarian emergencies, particularly for smaller countries like Canada. This paper will make some observations on the Zaire operation, and suggest ways to improve the capability of the international community to respond more quickly and more effectively in the future. We will also make some suggestions that address Canada's reaction capability.

OBSERVATIONS

Political Issues

Observation 1: Though the international community had ample early warning that the situation in the Great Lakes Region would degenerate, the response to the crisis was still slow.

Though it was clear at least since the 1994 civil war in Rwanda that the entire region was volatile, and that the refugee camps were a source of serious instability, the international community was unable to take real action preceding the crisis in Zaire to address its root causes. Even when clear and ample early warning was sounded that hostilities were imminent, the international community remained inactive. In the absence of the Canadian proposal for a multinational force under Canadian command, the international community is unlikely to have organized a force to intervene. The problem was not lack of warning, but lack of political will among some to sacrifice

parochial interests enough to organize a coherent and effective multinational response.

The problems encountered went well beyond the absence of mechanisms, and demonstrated that even the best mechanisms are useless without the political will to use them properly. A good example was the Western European Union (WEU). The WEU is a group of relatively 'like-minded' nations. It had a political commitment to respond to such crises and had available to it existing military forces and command structures through the NATO\ Combined Joint Task Forces. Despite all that, however, the WEU did not manage to mount any kind of operation, because its members were seriously divided by political interests. The utility of the new mechanisms being developed, such as the "Standby Forces High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG)", will be just as dependent on effective political direction.

Recommendation 1: While development of existing early-warning and rapid response mechanisms should continue, the prime focus of our efforts should be on the politics and mechanics of mobilizing political will and ensuring an effective response.

Observation 2: Canada was well placed to lead the formation of this MNF.

The Canadian Forces are experienced in peacekeeping operations, and are considered highly professional and impartial by the international community. Canada has a history of constructive engagement in the region unencumbered by parochial geopolitical interests, as well as a well-known and respected commitment to the United Nations. For these reasons, parties on the ground and potential MNF partners were prepared to accept our leadership in forming the mission.

Some others share, to a greater or lesser extent, the characteristics that facilitated Canadian leadership of the formation of the mission. The Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands, for example, have competent armed forces, and in most cases are considered impartial countries with no recent history of armed intervention in support of parochial interests.

The irony needs to be recognized, however, that the very qualities that make these nations politically acceptable as leaders of coalitions may also limit their ability to mount and direct them effectively. These countries do not have

overwhelming military forces, nor the political clout to obtain cooperation from reluctant parties. Furthermore, in these circumstances, these countries do not have the strong geo-political or economic interests in the particular region that would encourage resolute policy determination and higher-risk military operations. The lead country therefore becomes susceptible to the influence of those more powerful nations who do have strong parochial interests.

Some of the major powers and those with colonial histories in the region would have had more difficulty in forming a multinational coalition, had they been so inclined. This is particularly true in the case of France, whose presence in theatre was in fact flatly rejected by some of the host parties. Similarly, the Government of Zaire, and potential partners in the MNF, would have suspected that a US-led force might support the cause of the Tutsi rebels.

Recommendation 2: Where the presence of major, ex-colonial powers is unwelcome, countries with no obvious parochial interests can be more acceptable in the formation and leadership of such missions (despite their operational limitations).

Observation 3: Almost any use of the MNF had political implications. The various political interests of parties on the ground and in the MNF made management of the mission difficult.

Unlike in "traditional" peacekeeping missions, this operation envisioned the insertion of armed forces into an area where the parties were still engaged in combat. In such circumstances, all use of military force has political implications. The parties on the ground, and some in the MNF, understood that the presence of the Force would affect the military and, therefore, political balance on the ground. The varying, and often competing positions of the parties on the ground and in the coalition was one of the primary obstacles to the effective use of the MNF.

The MNF was formed around the consensus that an impending humanitarian emergency required a "humanitarian" response involving the military. In fact, the label "humanitarian" became a "fig leaf"; countries coalesced around the need to address the immediate humanitarian concerns, without being willing to take the difficult political decisions to agree to a well-defined

and coherent policy on the effective and appropriate use of the military in support of humanitarian goals.

It should be noted, however, that the MNF, in fact, played a political role despite limited operations. The very presence of the MNF provoked Tutsi rebels in Eastern Zaire to begin clearing out the refugee camps, which went a long way towards fulfilling the original goals of the mission. The MNF also played a political role on the ground in negotiating with regional leaders, including arranging some access for the Humanitarian Agencies to Eastern Zaire.

Recommendation 3: Nations participating in military operations while combatants are still engaged in hostilities must be aware that almost any use of military personnel will have a political influence on the ground. Coalition partners must be alive to the various political interests at play, and, to the

extent possible, should agree on the political/military role of the Force, and use it to that end.

Observation 4: Canada did not have the influence to direct the MNF in ways its "larger" partners did not want to go, nor could Canada effectively influence the parties on the ground.

By definition, smaller powers will generally not have the political, economic or military levers required to coerce reluctant partners into a particular action. This is, of course, particularly true in the case of the large powers in the coalition. Canada had few levers, beyond moral suasion, to pressure larger nations, a problem made worse because some of those nations had national agendas and geopolitical interests in the region which were often in opposition to Canadian intentions. Other, smaller members of the coalition also had their own sets of goals and interests which did not necessarily coincide with those of Canada. Canada was similarly unable to convince the parties on the ground to cooperate in any meaningful way with the MNF.

Recommendation 4: Smaller powers should attempt, if possible, to lead multinational coalitions only where there is limited involvement of major powers with significant geopolitical and/or economic interests in the affected region, and where they have guaranteed access to such key military resources as intelligence, essential logistics and sustainability.

Observation 5: Almost all troop-contributing nations, including Canada, made the presence of US ground forces a condition of their participation.

There were both military and political reasons why US participation was seen as necessary. The United States has unparalleled military capability, including the strategic airlift and intelligence capabilities which are essential to this type of operation. US forces are also uniquely capable of rapid and robust reaction to contingencies; many potential participants have cited this as a reason why they insisted on US participation in the Zaire operation. Politically, the presence of US ground forces encourages continued American commitment in the operations.

The requirement for US participation also provides some insight into the future of similar operations. It is unlikely that another nation will soon rival American military capability, and increasingly so as governments around the world are cutting their military budgets. It is likely that, for the foreseeable future, multinational military coalitions formed for Chapter VII operations will require some kind of large power, and likely US military participation, with all the concomitant political difficulties.

Recommendation 5: Smaller powers should investigate the development of mechanisms which facilitate the participation of large powers in multinational coalitions, while mitigating their political influence on the military operations.

Recommendation 5a: Smaller powers should discuss the feasibility of pooling resources to develop some common assets, such as intelligence, essential logistics and sustainability, which might reduce the dependence on the United States in certain situations.

Recommendation 5b: We must recognize, however, that the US is, at present, essential to almost any Chapter VII operation. For that reason, successful leadership of such a mission by a smaller power must involve understanding and influencing the political process in Washington.

Observation 6: The fluidity of the situation on the ground emphasized the importance of good intelligence. It also became clear that intelligence can be used as a political tool.

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

each other for influence and financing. Some (not all) of these clearly tried to influence the MNF during the crisis, providing suspiciously high numbers of refugees in need and using the media as a lever.

Furthermore, on occasion many of the Agencies seemed almost intentionally blind to the political and military implications of some of the suggestions and requests they made both privately and to the media. The public confusion over the numbers of refugees was, to a certain extent, a symptom of this. The numbers provided by some Humanitarian Agencies and NGOs included all the refugees in Eastern Zaire, while Governments considered primarily those people in need whom the MNF could actually reach from outside the country. These political differences are fundamental and go beyond the differences that arose from differing perceptions of the appropriate role for the military.

Recommendation 7: Government and the media must recognize that some Humanitarian Agencies have political interests and agendas that influence their actions on the ground, the intelligence they provide and their media relations. Governments and the media must make every effort during a crisis to understand this, and to differentiate between the various Humanitarian Agencies and NGOs.

Recommendation 7a: Governments should investigate putting in place standing agreements with reputable Humanitarian Agencies, whereby certain military logistics assets would be identified for near-automatic support to HAs and NGOs in time of extreme need. This might obviate the need to involve military personnel in humanitarian operations, thereby minimizing the political effects of military involvement and confusion over mandates and missions.

Observation 8: The coalition may have been difficult to manage because there were too many parties invited, for too many reasons.

The Steering Group proved an unwieldy instrument with which to provide political direction to the MNF. Large, inclusive membership, combined with a decision-making process requiring consensus, made the Steering Group hostage to any one of the many members. It became possible to get agreement only on lowest-common-denominator decisions, such as air-drops of food to refugees; this, while only one country ever formally devoted assets

or personnel to the MNF. (The MNF was dissolved when that country, Canada, established a consensus of one to bring the mission to an end.)

Problems with the Steering Group may illustrate another, perhaps larger, problem, that Canada tried to meet too many agendas in forming the MNF and the Steering Group. Canada's primary goal was to create a coalition that could offer sufficient military forces, and that could effectively manage those forces. However, other countries were also included for political reasons not related directly to the military mission, including the maintenance of good bilateral relations with individual countries or regional organizations. We may, in the end, have created an unworkable coalition by not remaining focused on the primary objective: the provision of an effective military mission.

Recommendation 8: Membership of a coalition should be restricted to those parties essential to meeting the primary objective, even if it means that other political interests are not met.

Observation 9: Some African countries feel that they were marginalised during the operation.

Significant diplomatic efforts were made by Canada to consult relevant African countries as the MNF was being developed and during its existence; the Prime Minister called some of his counterparts, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and National Defence spoke with many of theirs, and the Secretary of State Latin America-Africa met with African leaders on the ground. Ambassador Chrétien, as the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, and LGen Baril, as the MNF Commander, also consulted extensively with local leaders. Furthermore, the participation of African countries in the MNF was actively solicited, and some African nations were, in fact, prepared to supply forces.

Despite these efforts, however, there is a perception among some African leaders that they were not adequately consulted. There is also the belief that the mission should have been led by Africans. There was some consideration given, early on, to the idea of an MNF composed entirely of African troops. This idea did not develop for a variety of reasons, including that no African country actually volunteered to lead.

Recommendation 9: Discussion should continue on ways to improve the capacity of African nations to respond to African crises. We must recognize, however, that this crisis required rapid reaction; until such time as the Africans are militarily and politically organized to lead and conduct a large multinational operation effectively, other nations should not hesitate to respond to emergencies, while making every effort to involve regional countries to the extent possible.

Observation 10: Forward momentum was most effectively sustained when the Prime Minister was personally engaged.

The formation of the MNF was possible largely because the Prime Minister was actively engaged, and spoke directly to his counterparts in other countries. When management of the mission dropped to the level of Ministers and senior officials, it became more difficult to convince other members of the MNF to agree to a position. This might suggest that leadership of a large coalition by a smaller power requires the constant engagement of the highest political level.

Recommendation 10: Further study should be devoted to the relative effectiveness of heads of Government, Ministers and senior officials in these situations, to determine whether the most senior member of the Government must manage the leadership of the mission to compensate for the relatively smaller size of the nation.

The Use of the Military

Observation 11: The appropriate role for military force in this operation was often misunderstood or ignored.

The Zaire operation was a response to a "humanitarian crisis" which was itself the result of a political conflict. When some Humanitarian Agencies called for the assistance of an international military force, they were hoping that the military would go into the camps, separate and/or disarm the intimidators, and allow for the delivery of aid by the Agencies. The military was requested to address the military impediments to the delivery of aid, not to deliver the aid itself.

While countries promised significant forces to the MNF, from the beginning they attached significant conditions even to any *potential* use thereof. The MNF was barely robust enough to conduct a Chapter VI operation, nor did it have the direction from its political masters to conduct the kind of robust Chapter VII operations for which it was mandated. The MNF was restricted to planning only for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, a role for which it was neither requested nor appropriate. The solution to the immediate crisis came about because the Tutsi rebels did what the Agencies wanted the MNF to do: neutralize the Hutu extremists and encourage the return of refugees to Rwanda.

Fulfilling the task the Humanitarian Agencies wanted done would have involved serious risks. It would also have required important political decisions - decisions that many nations did not want to take, and on which an international consensus may not have been possible. Thus the question may not be why nations chose not to do what the humanitarian agencies asked, but rather why the attempt to deploy a force continued despite the clear unwillingness of the international community to carry out the tasks for which a force was required. In these circumstances the difficulties encountered in mounting a mission and the public differences of view between the Humanitarian Agencies (and NGOs) and governments and militaries may have been inevitable.

Recommendation 11: An MNF should not be deployed until the resources required to conduct the mission are formally devoted to it, and there is agreement among participating nations to allow the forces to be used as necessary to fulfil the mandate.

Observation 12: Because some nations defined the goal of the military mission as humanitarian, it was difficult to decide when it should come to an end.

The use of the military for "humanitarian" deployments is a recent phenomenon. It is an innovation that raises many concerns, particularly among Humanitarian Agencies and NGOs. The record of results is checkered, to say the least. For all the good that has been achieved, many of these missions have been regarded as failures; UNPROFOR serves as a powerful example. Many respected analysts believe that this is because these deployments are the direct result of the urge to "do something", despite the

absence of (or unwillingness to take) policy decisions that would give appropriate guidance and purpose to a military deployment.

In this case, as the refugees were freed from ex-FAR and Interahamwe coercion and began to return to Rwanda, the international community began to engage in debate over whether the military mission was still required. Those who defined the goals of the military mission as humanitarian noted that there were still, by late December, people in need in Eastern Zaire, and supported the extension of the mission. The problem with the purely humanitarian definition is that there will always be people in need in Eastern Zaire, but the military is not the appropriate tool to address these long-term humanitarian problems, not least because armed forces are not considered by the parties on the ground to be "neutral".

Furthermore, the use of the "humanitarian" label to cover a military mission with significant political ramifications has potentially negative implications for Humanitarian Agencies. The military and the Humanitarian Agencies can become identified with each other, exposing the humanitarian workers to very real physical danger.

Recommendation 12: Military missions, and the success or failure thereof, should be defined in terms of clearly understood military goals in a political context, rather than humanitarian objectives.

Observation 13: By taking the lead of the mission without contributing combat troops, Canada was in a weak military and political position.

In leading the mission without any significant numbers of combat troops, Canada was dependent on other nations to conduct any significant operations. Furthermore, countries are generally reluctant to hand over operational control of combat forces to a lead nation that does not provide combat forces of its own. Despite deploying a large number of forces to the region, Canada never had available the operational capability that would have enabled it to undertake military missions in Zaire on its own, had it wished to do so.

Recommendation 13: The country that takes the lead in an MNF should contribute relevant numbers of combat troops to it.

Observation 14: The speed with which the military can deploy was poorly understood by some.

Some Government leaders, Humanitarian Agencies and reporters demonstrated a fundamental misunderstanding of the speed with which the military can deploy. There was a clear expectation that armies would be fully deployed in theatre almost instantly after a political decision was taken. It was not well understood that this operation involved the movement of tons of machinery and hundreds of people to Africa, and their establishment on the ground, all of which takes time. In fact, the Canadian Forces deployed extremely quickly upon receiving direction; this was a good example of rapid reaction. It should be noted, therefore, that the time it takes to deploy even the swiftest military force may make it an inappropriate tool for some emergencies.

Recommendation 14: More information must be provided to Governments, media and Humanitarian Agencies on the capabilities and limitations of armed forces.

Mechanisms

Observation 15: No mechanism exists for the effective formation and management of Chapter VII operations. Operating outside existing structures complicated the formation and management of the MNF.

International systems and structures already exist for collective self-defence (e.g. NATO). Where relatively safe multinational operations are required, the UN can effectively mandate and execute Chapter VI operations, and steps have been taken to improve this capability. However, at present, no mechanisms exist that effectively facilitate operations under Chapter VII. Canada had, therefore, to lead the creation of an ad-hoc coalition, a process which began with the Prime Minister's calls to his counterparts in other countries to solicit contributions.

In mechanisms such as the UN Security Council and the NATO North Atlantic Council, the decision-making process is well-established, and the relative weight and capabilities of the members understood. In the Steering Group formed to manage this crisis, however, Canada attempted to forge consensus with an unfamiliar coalition of partners, operating in a fluid

decision-making environment. This rendered more difficult the management of competing goals, a problem that became particularly acute after the refugees began to move in significant numbers back to Rwanda. In addition, valuable time was spent negotiating and drafting the legal and administrative arrangements for the MNF. All of this made effective management of the mission even more difficult.

Much work has been done recently, both in Canada and abroad, to create new mechanisms to improve the capability of the international community to provide military forces quickly when agreement exists on their deployment. The Canadian study, "Toward a Rapid Reaction Capability for the United Nations", made well-received recommendations to improve those capacities at the UN; as a result of that initiative, the UN has already begun to set up a Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters.

Similarly, Canada has agreed to participate in the Danish proposal for a Standby Forces High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG). Under SHIRBRIG, participating nations indicate a willingness to contribute forces to the brigade for operations under Chapter VI of the UN Charter, and to participate in a Steering Committee and Planning Element. This initiative develops the idea of the "vanguard concept" outlined in the Canadian *Rapid Reaction* study. However, even though this brigade is planned for use only in Chapter VI operations, nations have firmly resisted any notion that its deployment might be automatic. Each nation has reserved the sovereign right to decide on each occasion whether or not its forces will deploy.

The UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs has established the Military and Civil Defence Units (MCDU) project, which serves as a point of access for governments to military and civilian defence assets, catalogues the needs of humanitarian agencies and sends out requests to donor nations to provide the desired personnel and/or equipment. During the Zaire crisis, the MCDU played such a liaison role in the field by facilitating military assistance, in the form of airlift capacity, to UN agencies and NGOs. Its success in this mission offers hope for the future. The operation, however, remains small, and is still regarded as experimental.

As noted above, the Western European Union (WEU) has also begun to create a capability to respond to humanitarian emergencies, using NATO assets. During the crisis, the WEU discussed mounting a limited mission to

the region, discussions which, in the end, led nowhere. Despite the large degree of common understanding which exists among WEU nations, this organization found itself unable to act because of significant political differences among its members. That being said, the WEU will continue to develop its capability to undertake certain missions in humanitarian emergencies.

The United States has also promoted the idea of the Africa Crisis Response Force. This initiative proposed the creation a 10,000-strong African force, which would be supported by Western countries through the provision of financing, logistics and intelligence. At the time of the crisis the initiative, which was not fully developed, did not form a basis for action. The USA, in conjunction with France and the United Kingdom, has now presented a modified version (called the Africa Crisis Response Initiative), which focuses on building African capacity through sub-regional organizations, and giving needed attention to political management issues.

These projects are not yet complete, and there are others in varying stages of development. However, these initiatives do not specifically address Chapter VII operations either. The ad-hoc response to the Zaire mission made it clear that these initiatives should be developed and, where appropriate, modified to broaden their application and to improve their effectiveness.

Recommendation 15: Where possible, existing bodies or councils should be used to manage multinational operations. Leadership is easier when the decision-making rules are in place, and where there is a clear understanding of the relative capacity of the members.

Recommendation 15a: Standard legal and administrative arrangements, such as ROE and SOFAs, should be negotiated internationally. Examples of this exist (the UN already has and uses a model SOFA) but the models need to be enlarged.

Recommendation 15b: Existing mechanisms, and those under development (such as the WEU) should be examined to see how they can be used, or adapted for use when the UN or NATO do not mount an operation, particularly for Chapter VII operations. NATO could be asked to examine a broader approach to the use of Combined Joint Task Forces in such crises. We also need to avoid rigidities in the system that unnecessarily inhibit the

use of resources and processes just because the specific conditions for which they were developed were not met.

Observation 16: **The MNF and the Humanitarian Agencies cooperated well throughout the operation.**

Various mechanisms were used or put in place to facilitate the coordination between the MNF and the Humanitarian Agencies. The UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) drew on the Military-Civil Defence Units project to coordinate the assets of various nations. As originally conceived, the Steering Group had a mandate not only to provide political direction to the military component of the operation, but also to assist in the coordination of humanitarian, peacebuilding, reconstruction and political activities of the international community in the Great Lakes Region. Canada, under the leadership of Minister Boudria and CIDA, hosted conferences of aid donors to ensure the necessary flow of assistance.

At the same time, the Force Commander put in place a small liaison team to advise him on the "civilian" side of the operation, a team which comprised a political advisor, a humanitarian advisor, and a legal and human rights advisor. The Humanitarian Agencies believe that these mechanisms worked well. Similarly an important liaison operation was launched in Canada, involving NGOs, CIDA, DND and DFAIT, that served as an effective mechanism for ensuring close coordination. Canada also supplied effective and much appreciated support to the UN in Geneva, including the loan of a military officer to the MCDU.

This close cooperation during the actual operation limited but, of course, did not eliminate differences between and among the NGOs, Humanitarian Agencies and governments. For example, consultation on the policy level could have been improved. The differences which figured so prominently in media coverage, however, owed far more to political differences (particularly regarding the appropriate use of military force) than to coordination problems.

It is also true that an effective international response during the "peacebuilding" phases of crisis management requires coordination among political, humanitarian, development, economic and military activities, as necessary. The actors could, at various times, include bilateral aid agencies,

the International Financial Institutions, the UN Departments of Political Affairs, Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the specialized agencies and other funds and programs operating in the field, as well as the governments of major aid donor countries. Adequate mechanisms for coordination are important, and while the UN has put in place coordinating mechanisms such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to address this the technical dimensions of this need, more work needs to be done on the political aspect.

Recommendation 16: Mechanisms used to facilitate the coordination between the MNF and the Agencies, such as the DHA, should be supported, and the ad-hoc mechanisms used on the ground should serve as a precedent for future operations. A particular focus should be placed on improving consultation at the policy level, with emphasis on information-sharing and analysis. However, no new *permanent* mechanisms appear to be required to improve coordination between Humanitarian Agencies and militaries.

Recommendation 16a: International mechanisms for the coordination during the "peacebuilding" phases of crisis management need to be identified and implemented on all levels.

Observation 17: The "Steering Group", while potentially an effective mechanism for the political management of a mission, can also very easily become a liability.

Several of Canada's partners insisted on the formation of the "Steering Group" to provide political management to the operation. It comprised all the potential troop-contributing nations, the principal Humanitarian Agencies, and major financial donors. The Steering Group operated by consensus, and convened as necessary, on an ad-hoc basis. The Group was chaired by Canada.

It should be noted that this kind of mechanism will likely be a part of any similar missions in the future. Its purpose is to give those with a stake in the use of forces a formal input into the decision-making process, and Canada has traditionally considered such input essential.

There were several advantages to the creation of the Steering Group. This mechanism limited Canadian political liability; as decisions were taken by consensus, Canada was not solely responsible for them, despite being the "leader" of the mission. The Steering Group also served to attract new members to the MNF; by allowing countries to participate in the early development of the mission, Canada hoped to secure their participation in the actual operation, or their financial support for it.

The Steering Group became a liability when it came time actually to manage the military mission. Some of the "partners" used the consensus mechanism to pursue their own agendas in the region. The process was particularly perverted in the case of this particular mission, because no country other than Canada ever formally handed over command of personnel or equipment to the MNF, yet they were all in a position to influence heavily its activities.

Recommendation 17: While partners and potential partners should be consulted as the operation is being developed, countries should have a say in the direct management of the military operation only after command of assets or personnel has been formally handed over to the MNF Commander.

Recommendation 17b: We must explore mechanisms that enable the Steering Group to operate effectively without being held hostage to any one or two voices. This might take the form of a two-tiered structure. The first level might be a large, consultative group of interested countries, mandated by an international organization (UN, OSCE, OAU, OAS). Within that, a small core to run the operation would be formed, made up of countries and agencies participating significantly in operations in theatre, and with enough common goals to manage the mission effectively.

Recommendation 17b: Careful attention should be given to the involvement in the consultation process of the country(ies) being assisted, and of those in the immediate region. Again, care must be taken not to allow consultation to replace or impede timely, resolute action.

Observation 18: Canadian communications strategy focused largely on domestic media.

As leaders of the multinational mission, it was in Canadian interests that the Canadian perspective on the mission be understood abroad. However, the Canadian communications effort during the operation focused almost

exclusively on Canadian media, such as CBC Newsworld and the Globe and Mail. Insufficient effort was made to communicate directly through the "international" media reaching wider audiences, such as CNN, BBC and BBC World Service, AP and AFP, and Reuters.

Recommendation 18: Successful management of multinational coalitions requires that communications efforts be directed not only to domestic audiences, but also directly through non-Canadian media structures to the international community.

Observation 19: **The Canadian Government created an Interdepartmental Task Force to coordinate Zaire-related activities.**

Three Departments were actively involved in almost all phases of this operation: DND, CIDA and DFAIT. In order to encourage coherent advice, intelligence and communications, and to reduce duplicative and/or contradictory effort, PCO housed an ad-hoc Interdepartmental Task Force. The Task Force had representatives from all three Departments, and was headed by officials senior enough to have direct access to the highest levels of the bureaucracy, and to Ministers.

Recommendation 19: The Interdepartmental Task Force worked well, and should be replicated in similar situations in the future.

A NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHORS

James Appathurai is a civilian employee of the Department of National Defence. He is currently employed in that Department's Directorate of International Policy.

Ralph Lysyshyn is a member of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. He works in the International Security Bureau.

Both authors were members of the Interdepartmental Task Force created to coordinate Canada's participation in the Zaire crisis. The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Department of National Defence, or of the Government of Canada. The authors greatly appreciate the many helpful comments and suggestions they have received from their colleagues.

LIBRARY E A / BIBLIOTHÈQUE A E



3 5036 01068210 5

DATE DUE

JUL 15 2005	
June 17 th	09

DOCS
CA1 EA 97L24 ENG
Appathurai, James
Lessons learned from the Zaire
Mission
54576343

