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# **A STUDY OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE AFRICAN GREAT LAKES CRISIS**

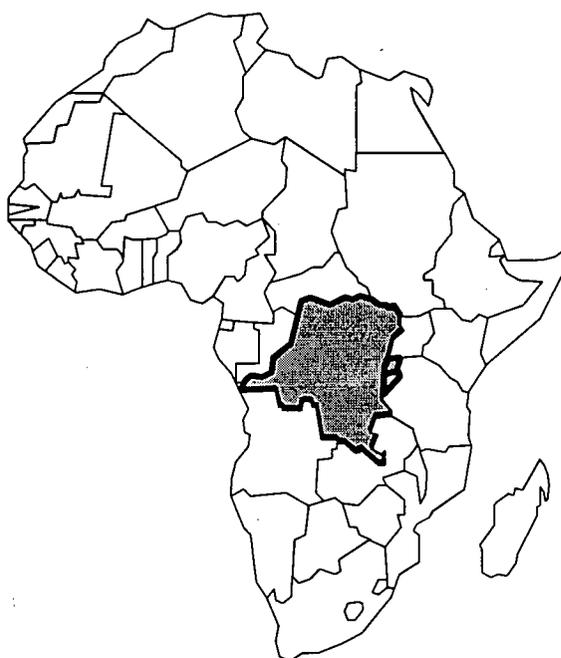


***Prepared by:***

***THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL  
EVALUATION - SIX  
APRIL, 1997***

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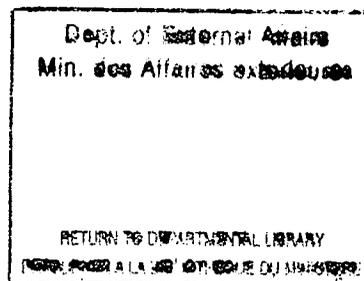
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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This study was only accomplished with the considerable assistance of those personnel who were intimately involved in the management of the Great Lakes Crisis. Their patience in reporting on their experiences and expertise in educating the evaluators to the nuances of their roles and tasks is greatly appreciated.

This message of appreciation extends not only to personnel at DFAIT, but to interviewees at the Department of National Defence, Privy Council Office, and the Canadian International Development Agency, as well as those responsible for undertaking their respective evaluative efforts.



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# **AFRICAN GREAT LAKES STUDY**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

This study, conducted under the Executive sponsorship of MME, sought to examine the efficiency and effectiveness of DFAIT's management of the African Great Lakes Crisis.

### **Profile**

DFAIT mobilized a Task Force of key Functional and Geographic staff in response to the Prime Minister's announcement that Canada would pursue a United Nation's mandate to lead a multinational force in the African Great Lakes region. Working in cooperation with PCO, DND and CIDA, this department fulfilled a broad range of management, coordination, communication and analytic activities to gain approval of UN Resolution 1080 (1996) and corral the international community for the purposes of averting a humanitarian crisis.

### **Analysis**

**Objectives** - The national goal (to mobilize a MNF) was interpreted with different slants, or emphasis within DFAIT. Agreed upon, DFAIT-specific objectives were not set, causing the focus to shift between the international community (and coordinating the MNF) and the contextual environment and events on the ground (in the AGL region). The issue can be represented in the question - '*was the department responding to a multinational crisis on African soil, or an African crisis requiring multinational involvement?*' This speaks to a 'duality of focus' which was represented in tensions between the Functional and Geographic divisions.

Results such as the return of the refugees and the avoidance of a humanitarian crisis are difficult to attribute. However, DFAIT's contribution, and success, is measurable in drafting the UN Resolution, providing political advice to the MNF Commander and Interdepartmental Task Force, as well as convening and chairing the International Steering Group.

**Structure** - DFAIT's Task Force was importantly non hierarchical, involving key staff and management in a collaborative decision making and delivery process. Some delay in formalizing the structure pointed to issues of a geographic versus multilateral lead role and the level of resourcing was not sustainable. The DFAIT Task Force was well linked to the Interdepartmental Task Force and International Steering Group.

**Delivery** - The delivery of DFAIT activities served to highlight DFAIT's value added, demonstrate concern with information and intelligence, and portray both strengths and weaknesses in communications.

**DFAIT's value added** - DFAIT's substantive contributions reinforce the importance of this Department's knowledge, expertise and international networks. The availability and extent of knowledge on foreign political and economic environments, regional security, humanitarian assistance, and multilateral fora was complemented by a well established and respected network of diplomatic relations. These were fully tapped, and taxed, in the management of this high profile and unique situation.

**Information and Intelligence** - Canada lacks an information and intelligence production (international data) capability and had minimal presence in the field (AGL region). These gaps were particularly noticeable in this situation, where Canada, as the MNF lead country, required base line data, upon which the intervention would unfold. This created a reliance on 'external' information and intelligence, and reinforced the need for analytic capabilities, to sift through, and consolidate, data coloured by vested interests. The lack of a common foreign intelligence reading was problematic in DFAIT (and Canada's) crisis decision making and management processes.

**Communications** - Recourse to verbal communication within DFAIT's Task Force proved to be fast, flexible and effective. While leaving little written record of the decision/management process, the group dynamics were reportedly invigorating and challenging. Added support for record keeping was required, and could have kept the crisis management effort more in touch with the rest of the Department, including Posts, as well as ease the burden of distribution and document flow.

### ***Lessons Learned***

A summary of lessons to be drawn from this experience follows:

- \* a flat, participative organizational design served the department well in managing the fast paced, unique events and in maximizing the talents of personnel in making and enacting decisions.
- \* single leadership would be more efficient and provide more consistent management.
- \* department-specific objectives should be articulated to designate clearly DFAIT's focus, and thus its internal lead and intended results.
- \* resources selected on the basis of current roles and proven knowledge and expertise enrich the department's efforts.
- \* the level of resourcing should be routinely reviewed during the crisis and augmented

when necessary. Reassignment from normal responsibilities should be explicit and a separate work area should be used to remove the demands of regular work.

- \* a central clearing unit with both officer and administrative support should be put in place to establish distribution and phone lists, receive and distribute material, create a paper trail of key decisions, actions and meetings, manage financial and physical resource requirements, and assist with communication efforts of the Task Group, including to the rest of DFAIT.
- \* the Interdepartmental Task Force served to bridge varying interpretations of the national objective, coordinate actions across departments and provide access and proximity to the Prime Minister's office (critical to the task of corraling international support and commitments)
- \* the lack of a Canadian intelligence production capacity creates a reliance on analysis and reinforces the need for consolidated intelligence analytical efforts, vested with the authority and confidence to produce a 'national position'.
- \* DFAIT's added value, in terms of international networks and the broader foreign policy view to bridging political, humanitarian and military concerns provided a positive contribution, in both strategic and operational terms.

**GLOSSARY**

ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
AGL	African Great Lakes
AGM	Human Security Division
AGP	Peace Building and Human Development Division
BCCH	Historical Section, Corporate Communications
BCM	Media Relations Office
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPP	Policy Planning Staff
DFAIT	Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
DND	Department of National Defense
GAF	West and Central Africa Division
GAFX	Special Envoy for Nigeria and Central Africa
GGD	Africa Bureau
IDC	International Security Bureau
ISO	Current Intelligence Division
MINA	Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs
MCL	Assistant Deputy Minister (Portfolio: Europe, Middle East and North Africa)
MMB	Assistant Deputy Minister (Portfolio: Asia Pacific and Africa)
MME	Assistant Deputy Minister (Portfolio: Corporate Services)
MNF	Multi National Force
MPH	Assistant Deputy Minister (Portfolio: Global and Security Policy)
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PCO	Privy Council Office
SIXE	Evaluation Unit, Office of the Inspector General
UN	United Nations
USS	Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

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# 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.

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# 2

## ***Methodology***

The project was scoped and received Executive approval (and sponsorship under MME) through the Terms of Reference contained in Appendix A.

Data collection included a review of the documented record, both internal files and the media coverage. Contextual information was gleaned from an exhaustive international study, the *Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda*, conducted following the 1994 genocide in this region, and from a limited literary review of published material on the political, social and economic history of the region. These sources provided the foundations for the interview process.

Twenty two semi-structured interviews were conducted, including personnel from DFAIT, DND, CIDA and PCO. This information was synthesized and analysed by the two evaluators to provide the following report. Of note, the original work plan envisioned the need for a workshop to assess departmental lessons learned. However, a workshop was convened on an interdepartmental basis under the auspices of PCO and provided both information and verification of the findings of this study. It was not felt necessary to repeat the exercise specifically within this Department.

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# 3

## ***Profile***

This section of the report will provide descriptive information and findings, in terms of the crisis objectives, structure, resources and activities. It is intended to profile the relief effort in DFAIT, providing information relevant to the issues under review in this study and not to be an exhaustive account of all actions. A more comprehensive, historical record of the African Great Lakes Crisis is forthcoming through the work of BCCH.

For the purpose of this study, arbitrary start and completion time frames are imposed to differentiate between the management of the crisis and 'every day business'. Specifically, this study explores the DFAIT's actions from November 10, 1996 when the Prime Minister announced Canada's intention to pursue UN approval for a Canadian-led multinational force, to December 31, 1996 when Canadian command and elements of the military force were withdrawn. It is recognized, however, that important activity both precedes and follows these time frames.

Precipitating this crisis, there were increasing hostilities surrounding the refugee camps in Zaire, resulting in the evacuation of Canadians from the region and thus critical withdrawal of humanitarian support. The Canadian Post in Kigali was instrumental in the evacuation process and, at Headquarters, GAFX had initiated interdepartmental meetings (weekly at first and then daily) to keep abreast of developments and share information. These meetings included representatives from impacted areas within DFAIT, CIDA and DND.

Additionally, Canadian Ambassador R. Chrétien had been enlisted as the United Nations Special Envoy (on November 1, 1996) and was significantly supported in his mission (from November 5 to December 5, 1996) by DFAIT Headquarters and Posts activities.

### **3.1 Objectives**

A national goal, or overarching objective was established through a decision of Cabinet and articulated by the Prime Minister in a press conference on November 12, 1996. Prime Minister Chrétien declared **Canada's intention to take a leadership role in mobilizing a multinational force (MNF) to address increasing tensions and humanitarian risks in Eastern Zaïre**. This provided the *raison d'être* for the mobilization of interdepartmental resources.

Recognizing that Canada, while not a superpower, is "a nation that speaks on the international scene with great moral authority," the Prime Minister committed the country to "urge the United Nations Security Council to pass a resolution mandating a Canadian-led international military force ... to prevent massive famine ... slaughter ... and help create a situation in which parties can work toward a political settlement." Moreover, the issue was defined as "a question of intervention for delivering what is needed in the camps ... not to intervene between belligerents"<sup>1</sup>

What Canada wanted to accomplish was the mobilization of the international community to avert a potential disaster in the Great Lakes region. This objective was widely understood and repeated by interviewees, and clearly remained the foundation and focus of the work which ensued.

This study also explored the existence of **DFAIT-specific objectives**, within this national goal. While some felt DFAIT objectives were not distinguishable from the overarching goal, a number of department-specific objectives were brought forward. They are summarized as:

- \* Maintain the continuity and integrity of Canadian policy, on Africa specifically, and more generally on peacekeeping and humanitarian aid- policy management
- \* Organize and lead the multinational *political* effort - political management
- \* Support the Prime Minister and DFAIT Ministerial actions-

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<sup>1</sup>Press conference, National Press Theatre, Ottawa - November 12, 1996.

information management, analysis and coordination activities

- \* Create the international operational mechanisms required to organize a multinational force (MNF)
- \* Engage African states, humanitarian agencies and multilateral organizations in the issue
- \* Manage media relations
- \* Participate in the interdepartmental efforts to coordinate domestic activities
- \* Improve upon the military\humanitarian disjuncture which occurred during the 1994 crisis in Rwanda
- \* Provide the political bridge for humanitarian and military actions and objectives
- \* Manage the intervention and then the exit ("to get us out")
- \* Facilitate the safe return of refugees to Rwanda

In pursuit of these objectives, DFAIT created a temporary organizational structure, designed to bring together the required skills and knowledge from various bureaus within the department.

### **3.2 Structure**

DFAIT created a special, temporary organizational unit to manage this crisis within the department. The DFAIT Task Force was not only linked to the Executive within this department (MINA), but was also connected to an Interdepartmental Task Force, coordinated through the Privy Council Office. These relationships and the functional components of DFAIT's structure are displayed in Appendix B, which is one of several charts created during the early stages of the crisis.

**Organizational charts** were created to help identify the nature of responsibilities required to manage this crisis, as well as assign staff to roles. The chart contained in Appendix B is but one of the iterations which the

Department devised during the first week of the crisis, as management decided what had to be done and who were the most appropriate people to be involved.

An e-mail message from USS, dated November 20, 1996, formally announced the creation of DFAIT's special Task Force and vested USS with a strategic leadership role. MPH and MMB were appointed as co-heads of the Task Force and co-ordination responsibilities went to GGD.

Other, earlier iterations of the organization chart were reported deficient for reasons of incompleteness, with regards to both the nature of responsibilities identified and the reporting relationships. The functional elements (or roles) required in this crisis evolved during the first week to include the Africa Bureau, Intelligence, Communications/Media, Political Military, Legal, Peacemaking, Humanitarian Assistance, Peace building, Civil Affairs and Reconstruction.

As these elements were drawn together, concerns were expressed regarding the prominence of the role of the Geographics, Africa Bureau (GG). These were addressed, to some extent, through the creation of a coordinator role, held by GGD. In spite of the various documented versions of the structure, many interviewees reported "it never really happened or materialized". The situation was managed, in reality, in a much more fluid and less hierarchical fashion than the organization chart in Appendix B would lead one to believe. The dynamics of the actual structure are addressed more fully in the section 4.2 of this report.

While operational **leadership** was clearly given to MPH and MMB, there were also two other ADMs brought in to assist. MCL provided back up coverage for MMB, who was committed to accompanying the Prime Minister on a trip to Asia from November 20 to December 3, 1996. MME also assisted in providing corporate services support to the Task Force and offering the benefit of her expertise in this region and experience from the last AGL crisis. This led to what many described as "tag team leadership".

A core group of key players from each of the functional components and the Geographics, formed a DFAIT Steering Group, meeting several times each day, and then collectively with the ADMs in morning briefing sessions. This was a collaborative, as opposed to hierarchical, relationship between DFAIT's Steering Group and the strategic and operational crisis leadership. Together,

the DFAIT Steering Group and ADMs formed the DFAIT Task Force. Ad hoc groups (or nodes) assembled to address specific issues and tasks. Notably a core policy and operations group operated consistently throughout the crisis.

DFAIT's organizational structure did not operate in a vacuum. It was critically connected to the Interdepartmental Task Force and to an International Steering Group, as well as to DFAIT Senior Executive (MINA).

An **Interdepartmental** Task Force was formed out of PCO, consisting of ADMs from impacted Departments (DFAIT, DND and CIDA) and the commander of the military force. This decision making group was created to manage interdepartmental coordination issues and was supported by the full time assignment of individuals, seconded from DND, DFAIT and CIDA for the period of the crisis. DFAIT's Task force both received direction from this entity and supported its decision making role by providing information and advice.

An **International** Steering Group was created to manage the creation of a multinational force, as approved in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1080 (1996). Resolution 1080 (1996) received unanimous support by the United Nations Security Council, establishing, under Chapter VII, a temporary multi national force "to facilitate the effective delivery by civilian relief organizations of humanitarian aid and ... to facilitate the voluntary, orderly repatriation of refugees ... as well as the voluntary return of displaced persons."

The International Steering Group, created and led by DFAIT, consisted of representatives of major troop contributing countries, major donors, the force commander and key Humanitarian Organization representatives and was struck (November 29, 1997) in the absence of entrenched Chapter VII systems and structures. DFAIT provided essential logistical support to this structure, as well as information and advice. The International Steering Group both drove some of DFAIT's activities and was supported by the DFAIT Task Force efforts.

### **3.3 Resources**

This section on resources captures the human, physical and financial aspects of the management of this crisis.

#### **Human**

Staff were assigned to this project based on both their existing positions (and the relationship to the required tasks and functions of the DFAIT Task Force) and on the basis of their knowledge of the region and expertise in dealing with international crisis situations. Therefore, people were 'plucked out' of regular roles to work on this effort, either within the department or in the interdepartmental group.

It is difficult to assess the precise human resource commitment made to this effort, as the Task Force not only exclusively corralled Headquarters' resources, and of course those in the AGL region, but also relied heavily on New York and other Posts around the world for support. A rough estimate of the Headquarter's human resources commitment to this crisis is **220 person weeks or 4.2 person years**, excluding the core of ADMs.

Supplementary support was provided to the Kigali Post, through the reassignment of an officer and one administrative support person, and similar, extensive hours of work were reported.

Interviewees, both at Headquarters and Posts report a lack of regard for the extent of secretarial/administrative support which is required during crisis management. It was felt this may relate to an erroneous expectation that technology has usurped this role. Interviewees report a lack of appreciation for the amount of administrative work required to coordinate all parties, and keep communications flowing.

#### **Physical**

Efforts were made at the beginning of the exercise to locate separate work space for core members of Task Force to work. However, a suitable spot was not found and each participant worked out of their regular worksite.

The Operations Centre was used extensively, and found very beneficial for communications tasks. However, it was not conducive to the substantive work done in preparing briefs, speaking notes, position papers, policy statements and the like. Similarly, the ad hoc nodes or work groups often

found themselves without readily available meeting space, and convened in the cafeteria.

### **Financial**

A message was forwarded to all areas in the Department on November 15, 1996 asking that expenditures related to the AGL Crisis be given a special priority code (44). A corporate run of monies spent under this code reveals **expenditures of \$190,893.63** were incurred as operating expenses, account code 014. This represents expenses for travel, accommodation, meals etc. No salary or overtime money is included here.

## **3.4 Activities**

Activities-related questions throughout the interview process were designed to identify the *range* of activities performed during the crisis rather than their specific detail. Activities performed during the Zaire-Rwanda crisis can be roughly grouped into **management and coordination, communication** and **analytic** categories.

From the interview data, we were able to observe that none of the activities performed during the crisis were significantly foreign to DFAIT. Though the activities' intensity, pace and visibility were all significantly greater during the crisis, they were all closely tied to existing functions and tasks. This study recognizes, however that some task force members performed activities far beyond the scope of their usual duties, primarily related to the unique leadership role which Canada assumed in this situation.

Of the first type, **management and coordination**, we identified:

- Leadership activities included DFAIT representation on the International Steering Group, to the international community, on the Interdepartmental Task Force, and to the media.
- The above linked into high-level coordination activities with USS, as well as DFAIT Task Force co-management activities, including task coordination, current and prospective, decisions on the nature and allocation of work, and situation and options assessment.
- Follow-up in-house coordination activities were managed by GGD. They included allocation of work, follow up on activities, advice and direction. Interviewees note that this appointment came as a result of

a recognized need for task follow-up - in other words, for a "wagon master".

Of the **communication** type, we found:

- Communication practices during the crisis were predominantly oral due to the prompt response expected in a rapidly-changing field situation. This left the *crisis management process* with a thin paper trail, i.e. little written material documenting the management and decision-making processes. Crisis-relevant, written material was mostly issue-specific and/or classified.
- Formal communication activities covered by the Media Relations Office (BCM) included media review, links to domestic and international media, and support for senior management's media exposure. BCM found media coverage of the Canadian-led initiative to be somewhat poor internationally and supportive domestically. Some interviewees disagreed with this assessment and found that domestic coverage became increasingly critical while the international media remained supportive throughout.
- Other organizational communication activities were assumed by IDC, to provide an on-site 'central clearing house of information' for all involved to consult and use. According to IDC, the service was well appreciated. Administrative support activities were also supplied through GGD.
- Task force-centred communication within DFAIT, with the Interdepartmental Task Force, Posts, and the international community were rated overall from fair to good, though some weaknesses were evident. An examination of these issues is submitted in section 4.3.3 below.

With regards to **analytic** activities, the following summarizes the roles provided by contributing areas:

- Activities encompassing regional security issues including policy matters, networking with international counterparts, operational and tactical details such as MOUs, SOFAs, flight clearances, and

diplomatic passport issuance were performed by IDC.

- Activities pertaining to foreign intelligence and information analysis were performed by DFAIT/ISO and GAF (to an extent), PCO/IAS and DND. Interview data revealed however the absence of an interdepartmental foreign intelligence coordination function mandated, for example, to ensure consolidation of foreign intelligence, analytic task assignment, and appropriate circulation of foreign intelligence analyses.
- Geographic-centred activities were numerous and effort intensive during the crisis. GAF/GAFX saw to the provision of :
  - \* region-specific knowledge
  - \* advice and perspective on the African Great Lakes geopolitics, issues, conflicts and dynamics
  - \* African leaders and countries' perspectives on the crisis
  - \* daily sitreps
  - \* field contacts and networks via posts
  - \* logistical and substantive support to out-going missions.
- African post-centred activities included liaison between DFAIT headquarters and field missions (e.g. R. Chrétien, General Baril, C. Stewart, etc.), and input into field situation assessments. Extensive and difficult logistical arrangements for all missions to the region were undertaken, a challenging task in view of the lack of local facilities and urgent time frames. Meetings with local officials (for the various missions) were negotiated, arranged and attended.
- Policy-specific activities covered different areas. CPP saw to corporate level policy planning input, provided UN specific procedures expertise and input, and drafted speech modules and position papers.
- The Global Issues Bureau (AGD) provided humanitarian assistance specific knowledge and information, policy input, and regular participation in International Steering Group meetings. The Bureau collaborated with CIDA on programming matters relating to humanitarian assistance provision and peace building. AGP in turn developed prospective papers on peace building and speech modules

with CPP.

- DFAIT also provided advisory support via resource secondment to DND/Baril, to Kinshasa, Kigali and Nairobi, and to the PCO. Advisory support activities covered strategic, field-specific and policy issues. DFAIT resource deployment in this respect was perceived to have been well received and appreciated by its recipients.

This profile of how DFAIT managed the crisis forms the foundation for the analytical section of this report which follows.

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# 4

## ***Analysis***

The delivery of regular business or a program requires attention to purpose (objectives), organization (structure), and delivery through activities or substantive actions. These same elements are relevant to project management, where the defining feature is the existence of a beginning and an end. Managing a crisis is, of course, intensified project management and therefore requires attention to these elements in such a way as to allow for prompt and accurate handling of the situation.

As such, the efficiency and effectiveness with which a crisis is addressed is very much dependant upon the organization's ability to articulate its purpose and organize itself to draw on the expertise required to deliver the product. This section assesses DFAIT's performance in these key areas of objectives, structure, and delivery.

### **4.1 Objectives**

#### ***What did we want to achieve?***

This question can be explored from a number of perspectives and, in this study, is both relevant and revealing from the point of view of; Canada to the international community, DFAIT within the Canadian bureaucracy or interdepartmentally and finally, in-house or within DFAIT itself.

As previously indicated, at a national level, Canada wanted to avert a potential disaster in the AGL region, through the mobilization of a multinational force which was authorized under a United Nations mandate. This goal was uniformly repeated during the course of the evaluation, and clearly remained the foundation for, and focus of, the work which followed.

This goal, at a high level, is well within stated Canadian foreign and defence policy<sup>2</sup> and tradition. One of the three key objectives of Canadian (DFAIT) foreign policy is the "*promotion of global peace*", which is complemented by a defence (DND) commitment to contribute to international security by "*participating in multilateral operations*".

Canada's unique membership in the anglophone and francophone worlds, its history as a non-colonizing power and status in key international groupings provides the platform for the pursuit of these foreign policy objectives, and, more specifically, for this initiative.

Canada had previously participated in the 1994 UNAMIR peacekeeping effort, supported the subsequent International Tribunal, and provided two UN Special Envoys (including the Chrétien mission at this time). A stated lack of strategic interest and minimal economic links with the AGL region ideally situated Canada as a neutral leader.

### ***Clarity of purpose / Interpretation***

Statements of objectives are importantly characterized by their clarity, measurability, and attainability. It is not sufficient that the objective be well known. It also needs to be understood in the same way by all involved parties. This speaks to the issue of clarity. It is here that issues of interpretation impacted DFAIT's efforts internationally, interdepartmentally and internally, within the department.

Even as Resolution 1080 (1996) was being approved by the UN Security Council, events were transpiring very quickly on the ground, leading to the return of massive numbers of refugees. This called into question the creation of a MNF and, specifically its ongoing role. As noted in the interdepartmental lessons learned, some nations queried the continued need for a MNF, while others defined the goal of the military mission as humanitarian, leading to questions of when it should come to an end.

These questions were played out in the International Steering Group, which was created and chaired by Canada to provide political management for the operation. This group was intended to fill an international systemic gap -

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<sup>2</sup> Canada in the World, 1995 and DND 1994 Defence White Paper

how to mobilize a MNF, and in particular how a middle power can lead a MNF. This was a unique situation internationally and for Canada specifically.

The agreed-upon, consensus style decision making used in the International Steering Group highlighted the differing interpretations of the MNF mandate and precluded final resolution on this issue of clarity of purpose. A lack of consensus ultimately led to a unilateral Canadian decision, closing down the operation and withdrawing its command at the end of December, 1996.

These international machinations were also evident on an interdepartmental basis. Here the longer term humanitarian objectives are juxtaposed with the shorter term military goals. This tension was apparent at a political level, and in many ways can be seen to be the result of the mandate embedded in the respective departments. These issues were managed within the Interdepartmental Task Force.

Interdepartmental tensions aside, there was some confusion within DFAIT over the scope of the multinational operation. It is not to say the question was openly debated. Rather, the interview process revealed an underlying tension pertaining to differences in the interpretation of the objectives.

***Was the department responding to a multinational crisis on African soil or an African crisis requiring multinational involvement?***

This is not a trivial distinction or question. A crisis of multinational concern on African soil implies a punctual deployment of humanitarian and military instruments to prevent and alleviate suffering in the refugee camps and provide refugees with safe passage back to Rwanda. This perspective calls for a short term operation that deals marginally with the region's geopolitics.

Conversely, an African crisis requiring multilateral involvement would imply international intervention on different fronts in the region's geopolitics. This calls for longer term involvement as it acknowledges dealing, not only with the humanitarian crisis, but negotiating issues such as regional destabilization, territorial disputes, ethnic violence, peace building and societal reconstruction. It is a perspective that does not preclude, of course, punctual deployment of operations.

The variety of objectives for this department, as presented in section 3.1,

demonstrate this bifurcated focus, evidenced between the Geographic and 'Functional'<sup>3</sup> streams in the organization. The issue is also relevant to how the department structured itself, as will be discussed in the next section (4.2).

The various DFAIT objectives were consistent with the overarching national goal and primarily reflect a different level of specificity, as well as the focus or bias of the interviewees' expertise and role. Importantly, these objectives also speak to, and link, DFAIT's value added to the interdepartmental, national initiative. For example, various objectives involved the continuity, integrity and promotion of Canadian foreign policy, specifically on this **region** of the world (and, more generally, on humanitarian aid and peacekeeping). Other DFAIT objectives involved the organization, corralling and coordination of the **international community** - a "political management issue".

Ironically, while bringing the various contributions of this department to bear on the national objective, this 'duality' of focus - African and International Community - did serve to blur the department's objectives, resulting in intra departmental tensions and making the measurement of success less clear cut.

### ***Were we successful and how do we know?***

Interviewees widely believed the overall effort to have been successful, but freely admit to a great deal of "luck" (in terms of the events which transpired) in the process. Interestingly, while some objectives were phrased in an administrative or technocratic fashion, there was uniform attention given to the humanitarian results in pointing to proof of success. "The safe return of the refugees" was routinely cited.

Objectives need to be not only clearly articulated, and understood by all, but also measurable in terms of results. Results in this situation can be roughly divided into two categories.

The first category includes "the avoidance of a massacre, avoidance of a humanitarian crisis (such as disease or starvation), and the return of the refugees to Rwanda". In these cases there are mixed reviews on the

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<sup>3</sup>Functional as used here, is intended to include areas such as IDC, CPP, AGM, AGP, ISO and JLOB. In other words, non-Geographic divisions.

**attribution of the Canadian effort** to the outcomes. In other words, these objectives were achieved, but the degree to which they can be deemed to be a result of Canadian actions is open to debate. Some argue that the mere threat of a MNF, as initiated by Canada, was the impetus for the Tutsis' to infiltrate the refugee camps, dislodge the Hutu position and allow for the return of the refugees.

On the other hand, a multinational force, outside of the Canadian command, was never actually deployed. It can be argued that the MNF rationale was overtaken by events, specifically, the return of the refugees. Alternatively, it can also be argued that there is questionable latitude for a nation, other than a 'super power' to manage the international leadership role.

The second set of results, brought forward in this study, deal more explicitly with Canadian actions, and include; "the quick deployment of troops, the integration of humanitarian and political thrusts in a military intervention, Canadian leadership in breaking the United Nations logjam, Canadian leadership in drawing the international community together through the Steering Group, and, more generally, in turning international attention to the issues in the Great Lakes Region."

Here a **causal link between these results and DFAIT-specific contributions** is more evident.

- Political and humanitarian advisors were assigned to General Baril, the leader of the MNF.
- DFAIT personnel drafted the United Nations Resolution which led to the approval of a Chapter VII intervention.
- DFAIT convened and chaired the International Steering Group (consisting of troop-contributing nations, key Humanitarian Agencies and major financial donors) and provided critical policy, informational and logistical support.
- Similarly, the mission by the Special Envoy of the United Nations, Ambassador Chrétien was assisted in large part by DFAIT Headquarters and Post work.
- The department was instrumental in negotiating and obtaining

appropriate administrative vehicles required for the deployment of a MNF

Finally, a measure of success involves to the department's ability to "maintain the continuity and integrity of Canadian foreign policy on this region of Africa specifically and on humanitarian aid and peacekeeping more generally". It is clear, in retrospect, that the Canadian-led MNF was short term and that it sought to relieve human suffering in the refugee camps and steer refugees back to Rwanda without involving itself in the AGL geopolitics.

A number of interviewees held that Canada had become involved, as well, to uphold its foreign policy for this region - to actively promote peace and security. It is therefore argued that, as the crisis is on-going and that more could have been done with the extent of multinational concern and commitment raised. In this regard, the department is currently drafting a long term action plan with respect to this region, taking recent and ongoing events into account.

## **4.2 Structure of the Crisis Management Effort**

How management arranges resources is critical to the success of an operation. Organizational designs, depicted in organizational charts, serve a number of purposes, including articulating the functional elements or roles in a project, assigning personnel to these roles, establishing reporting lines and demonstrating accountability.

The creation of organizational charts for DFAIT's management of this crisis was designed to serve these purposes. It provided a mental map of what needed to get done and who would do it. The organizational chart in Appendix B went through a number of iterations, and many respondents indicated that the reality looked quite different.

### ***The lead***

The composition of DFAIT's task force reflected an awareness of the need for region- and issue-specific knowledge and expertise. Recourse to the latter during the crisis was demand driven and at times prospective. While the department rose to the challenge in securing the right resources, this did not occur without friction. There were tensions over the lead, versus supportive or consultative roles, which appear to stem from organizational dynamics

relevant to DFAIT's dichotomous (functional / geographic matrix) operations and the differing interpretations given to the objective.

The department is organized into Geographic Bureaus, who deliver regionally specific programs, often with the consultative support of the 'functional divisions' (such as IDC, AGM etc). This places the Geographics as the client or recipient of the functional divisions' counsel and advice.

However, the functional divisions also provide 'externally delivered' programs in the management of Canadian international relations and participation in multilateral fora. In these cases, to some extent, the Geographics provide consultative (region-specific) support to the functional divisions. The client:provider relationship is thus reversed.

In the case of the AGL initiative, the approach to the objectives situates the players. As described in the section above, seeing the objective as a multinational issue, on African soil places a different lead and organizational dominance than does an African crisis needing international support.

The former places the functional divisions in the lead, with the Geographic supporting the international mobilization effort. The latter, an African crisis, would imply Africa Bureau Leadership, with functional division support.

According to some, the management approach, at first, was towards 'generic' solutions to a multinational issue. Some found the department reluctant to introduce region-specific issues into the day-to-day deployment. Some argued that the initiative was more of a multilateral humanitarian operation than an involvement in the AGL geopolitics, and thus justified recourse to a more "template-like approach."

It is noteworthy that perception of this tension was uneven; most interviewees mentioning it, but to different degrees. Resolution, or at least minimization, of these tensions occurred as the central coordination role was assumed by GGD. This was seen to reflect recognition of the importance of region-specific knowledge and expertise and of contextualizing the issues and decisions. However, this assignment of roles was not formalized until roughly November 18, 1996, approximately one week into the crisis.

***Actual structure***

These tensions aside, DFAIT's Task Force presented other significant characteristics. An alternative portrayal of the structure, Appendix C (our version of the core group C-1 and the internal/external linkages in C-2) would seem to more accurately reflect the relationships and roles which actually emerged. The environment was fluid, constantly changing at a quick pace, with ad hoc working groups or nodes forming as the issues demanded. An Operations and Policy group operated fairly consistently throughout. Notably, all key participants were linked to the core, a departure from the traditional hierarchical structures in the department.

This lack of management layering was uniformly applauded by interviewees as efficient and effective - "empowering for staff and liberating for senior management". Information was shared first hand, minimizing the potential for communication breakdowns. Decisions were taken in a participative fashion, providing valuable experience for staff and, for management an added measure of confidence in the competence of staff. The structure also allowed staff to enact decisions from a sound basis of knowledge and understanding of the rationale, critical to the fast moving situation.

In this regard, staff report real benefits and learning experiences from exposure to the four ADMs who were alternately in charge. However, this density of leadership also led to slightly different or shifting emphasis and focus, as the reins were handed from one ADM to another. The number of ADM's committed to this exercise also impacted the organization as a whole, as duties were reassigned. Single leadership would overcome these issues.

The uniqueness of this crisis (Canada's leadership in a MNF, a lack of multilateral channels for organizing the MNF, and the direct involvement of the Prime Minister) placed exacting and strenuous demands on staff. The combination of the high risk factor and the speed with which events transpired served to create an intense and exhausting demand on personnel.

It was uniformly reported that there were insufficient resources applied to the project and this concern was exemplified in the extensive schedules maintained by participants during the crisis. Fourteen to twenty hour days were regularly performed, seven days a week. As one interviewee reported

"we were organized for a sprint, not a long distance run" and "it was not sustainable".

While the department was quick to corral those who had experience with the region and with the nature of the work to be done, the depth of personnel assigned to the Great Lakes Crisis was underestimated and severely taxed during the operation.

DFAIT's organizational structure was part of a larger picture in the management of this crisis, specifically including the Interdepartmental Task Force and the International Steering Group. It is not within the scope of this study to evaluate these other organizational structures, except with respect to how they influenced DFAIT's Task Force.

In this regard, the structures were closely linked, with common membership at the level of ADM. This provided for close communications and reciprocating support and direction. Once again the flat structure of DFAIT's Task Force meant that information and decisions from these other bodies were quickly and clearly transferred to staff.

### **4.3 Delivery of the Crisis Management Effort**

While an organization's management structure enables it to mobilize and respond to a crisis, its substantive capabilities provide crisis-specific expert advice and product delivery. The extent to which an organization seeks out such expertise during a crisis response effort is as critical to success as are the means by which it leads and tasks an ad hoc response team.

The following section focuses on the principal substantive capability issues with which DFAIT dealt during the course of the African Great Lakes crisis. They include issues pertaining to DFAIT's added value, intelligence and information, and communication.

#### **4.3.1 DFAIT's Added Value**

DFAIT's substantive contribution to the AGL crisis effort was not only significant, it was instrumental to Canada's ability and success to meet its objective. The department's substantive strength - in two areas in particular - warrants due recognition and applause. Its strong suits lay in its **knowledge**

**and expertise** providing the ability to bridge political, humanitarian and military concerns in strategic and operational terms, for one; and for another, in its established diplomatic **networks**, i.e. its relations with African and contributor countries' and partner organizations' counterparts.

### ***Knowledge and Expertise***

From the moment the Prime Minister's initiative was declared, DFAIT's senior management began recruiting its task force members, and many of them were selected on the basis of relevant professional experience and established expertise. The previous section examined the crisis management structure and indeed underlined the department's favourable disposition to seek out experienced resources.

It is important to recall that DFAIT had at headquarters, on November 10th 1996, seasoned personnel with expertise and operational knowledge of African conjunctures and issues, multilateral institutions, and crisis management. The existence of such a significant resource pool certainly points to the benefits of the department's rotational career path system.

If one is to speak of departmental readiness in terms of knowledge and expertise, then it is fair to say that neither the geographic nor the functional streams had, at the start, a clear sense of the requirements, new and familiar, which the Prime Minister's declaration of leadership would demand. Most interviewees agreed that the initiative's visibility placed unprecedented pressure and expectations on those involved.

Although prior crises had mobilized and challenged DFAIT's resources, this one required DFAIT to service the Prime Minister directly, rally the international community, set the stage for military deployment, and to deal with the field situation's unexpected and brisk twists and turns - all in a very short time frame and not least, under close domestic and international scrutiny.

### ***Was DFAIT ready, in terms of knowledge and expertise, to tackle the multinational operation?***

In many respects it was.

- GAF/GAFX and Posts had been keeping a close watch on the

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.

***How was DFAIT positioned to perform in this respect?***

The Department benefits from the following:

- An established knowledge-base with regards to foreign political and economic environments;
- An established knowledge-base with regards to regional security and peace keeping, and humanitarian assistance and peace building;
- Internationally respected experience in diplomacy and established networks of diplomatic relations in Africa and contributor countries;
- Established experience in dealing with, and responding to, international matters and foreign policy, and specifically international crises and participation in multinational crisis resolution initiatives, humanitarian and military;
- A management structure supporting analytic capabilities in functional and geographic areas.

The above attributes enable DFAIT to translate one department's concerns for the benefit of another, and to pitch military and humanitarian concerns into terms at once relevant to a given geopolitical context and mindful of field and international sensitivities.

***How did DFAIT use and promote its bridging ability during the African Great Lakes crisis?***

Witness three examples:

- DFAIT was a central player in interdepartmental decision-making. Indeed, the Department was involved in such key decisions as:
  - \* structuring an operational response to the Prime Minister's announcement November 10th 1996;
  - \* securing deployment - diplomatic, multinational, military, and humanitarian - and orchestrating logistics (military

excepted);

- \* corraling the commitments for a multinational force;
- \* signalling mobilization to and demobilization from the field.
- Recognition of the critical importance of DFAIT's knowledge and expertise was implicit in the PCO's appointment of DFAIT secondees to the Interdepartmental Task Force. The Department's participation in the central task force enabled the PCO to tap as directly as possible into DFAIT's foreign service expertise. All other political motivations aside, it is clear the PCO found it appropriate if not altogether strategic to equip and lead its central coordinating function with a built-in linkage into DFAIT.
- Ambassador Chrétien's appointment as UN Special Envoy spoke not only of the quality of his personal knowledge and expertise but also of DFAIT's ability to foster excellence in its midst. As UN Special Envoy, Chrétien demonstrated a wide range of professional assets, many stemming from his post experience in the Great Lakes region. DFAIT's rotational human resources stream is in fact designed with such a range in mind.

DFAIT succeeded during the AGL crisis in bridging the political, humanitarian and military. The ease with which it did so was evident in its diplomatic dialogue, in its contributions to international fora and in its rigorous support of the interdepartmental effort.

DFAIT's ability to grasp and appreciate foreign policy matters and international occurrences from a broad perspective encompassing political, economic, diplomatic, humanitarian, and security angles gives it an advantage in an interdepartmental setting tasked to deal with an international or multilateral crisis. It is one to promote and exercise.

### ***Networks***

The Department's other strong suit lies in its established diplomatic networks and relations. Canada counts of course on DFAIT to develop and maintain diplomatic relations with most countries, but it is a role which can be underestimated and under-valued. The standing of Canadian diplomatic

relations was instrumental however in enabling the Prime Minister to launch this initiative last November and thereafter enabling Canada to corral multinational commitment in support of it.

Examples are numerous. As soon as the Prime Minister made his announcement, DFAIT had to follow through on the twenty-plus contributor commitments the Prime Minister had himself solicited and obtained. The Department had to negotiate conditionalities and deal with reservations of all kinds. DFAIT also had to construct an international forum in which Chapter VII terms of engagement would be discussed and debated among contributor countries. It had to attune itself quickly to super-power and middle-range countries' interests and agendas and juggle them in the multinational initiative's best interest. Such activities were only achievable with the support of established and cultivated diplomatic relations.

Personal relationships between DFAIT personnel and their counterparts in contributor and African countries stemming from past collaborations and postings, facilitated contact, dialogue, steering and conferencing. Personal contact is inevitably woven into diplomatic relations, and it can become an additional asset if the chemistry and cards are right. During the AGL crisis, DFAIT had many opportunities to call upon the personal element in a number of its diplomatic contacts, and many interviewees found this to be beneficial to the overall process.

As a final example, DFAIT also had the benefit of developed networks and relations with partner organizations involved in the African Great Lakes region. CIDA, UN organizations, and NGOs are familiar interlocutors. Drawing on these contacts and linkages made it easier for DFAIT to seek feedback, garner support and focus its efforts more effectively.

These examples bear witness to the foundational character of Canada's diplomatic relations and networks. But more to the point, these examples underline the critical importance of the quality of the relations and networks Canada has developed over the years.

#### **4.3.2 Information and Intelligence Production and Analysis**

Data gathered from the interview process revealed a gap in foreign intelligence and information. The unavailability of some intelligence and

information is not merely an issue for DFAIT alone, but for other government departments as well. Canada, as a country, is simply not generating the foreign intelligence and information its departments need to pursue international operations. The gap therefore was identified by most interviewees as a problem that hampered the crisis management process.

Interviews revealed a wide spread appreciation of the distinction between foreign intelligence and information **production** and **analysis**. A poor to non-existent production capability was identified as a strategic disadvantage for Canada (not just for DFAIT) during the AGL crisis. On the other hand, most interviewees concurred that DFAIT, specifically, had a fair to outstanding intelligence and information analytic capability.

### ***Production***

Foreign intelligence and information production in other countries (i.e: US, France, the UK) rests with their national foreign intelligence agency or operation. Canada has no such operation. It has, on the other hand, a domestic intelligence production capability. Canada thus relies on its foreign posts and on friendly countries for foreign intelligence and data.

The need for a Canadian foreign intelligence service is a debatable question. One can argue that Canada's need for foreign hard data and intelligence is indeed of secondary importance. As a frequent and reliable participant in multinational operations, Canada has not had to establish the base line data upon which an intervention unfolds. As Canada had not taken the lead in an international military and humanitarian initiative prior to November 1996, its requirements for a sustained Canadian foreign intelligence operation might not have appeared pressing.

The Prime Minister's declaration of leadership in a multinational involvement last November did present Canadian departments - among them DFAIT - with **new requirements**. In its leadership capacity, Canada would need to justify its initiative and corral multinational participation based on a rationale grounded in African Great Lakes-specific intelligence and refugee data.

Its inability to produce this data hampered the decision-making and mobilization processes in Canada and in the ad hoc international forum, the International Steering Group, created to discuss and define MNF

intervention parameters.

***The Impact of a gap in Intelligence production***

- The various Canadian departments involved in the initiative often examined different data sets and disputed other departments' data.
- It also became evident to DFAIT's task force members and to the Interdepartmental Task Force that the foreign intelligence and information obtained from partner countries and organizations (e.g. NGOs active in the region) were coloured by the latter's own interests and pursuits in the Great Lakes region. For example, it was perceived by many at DFAIT that the Canadian NGO community active in the Great Lakes region produced field reports attuned to their on-going relief activities and programs (i.e. the numbers and conditions were exaggerated). On the other hand, the United States, wary of involvement and of another Somalia, was perceived to deflate numbers with a view to support its own position.

Refugee-related data (i.e. their numbers, location, state of health, and later, intended destination in Rwanda) supplied by outside sources were widely conflicting. Sorting through the discrepancies and agreeing on a set of numbers became a thankless yet necessary task, and one that was not altogether achieved.

The sorting did begin once the discrepancies became apparent, and once the possibility of "interested" data was acknowledged. There were however inter- and intra departmental disagreements over the accuracy and the reliability of the information and intelligence obtained. This alone sufficed to hamper the crisis management process and prolong discussions regarding the scope of the pending military and humanitarian intervention.

- Many interviewees found DFAIT poorly serviced in post-generated field-specific intelligence and information. These were deemed critical as they could have provided DFAIT - and Canada - with a basis upon which to rely for verification of numbers, ad hoc alliances, networks and the rapidly changing political moods in Kinshasa, Eastern Zaire and Rwanda. Some interviewees, on the other hand, argued that the field capability was there, and though limited by its means, that it presented fair if not accurate readings of field

situations. The problem lay rather with DFAIT headquarters' reluctance to trust the accuracy of these readings, especially if they differed from perspectives established by greater powers. These differences aside, it was recognized that Canada's minimal representation in the area and continued withdrawal from the African continent are to blame for the observed weakness - not the field personnel.

The difficulties stated above point to conditions stemming from implications of earlier foreign policy decisions. Specifically,

- An absence of an Embassy in Kinsasha and of a Canadian presence in Zaire
- A minimal Canadian presence in the Great Lakes region overall (minimal in Kigali, non-existent in Burundi)
- The non-existence of a Canadian foreign intelligence operation

Had Canada been enabled with a foreign intelligence capability of its own or with an effective operational understanding of potential data biases, it would have been in a position either to generate field-specific and field-relevant data or to verify in-coming intelligence and information. Thus conflicting information and intelligence obtained from outside sources would not have presented the problems they did, and ultimately would not have slowed the crisis management process as it seems to have done.

To correct the gap in foreign intelligence and information production could, at first glance, point to a recommendation to equip Canada with a foreign intelligence agency. The reality of Canadian expenditure priorities however does not lead to such an option: a significant portion of the Canadian electorate is and has been opposed for some time to increases in military or surveillance expenditures as Canadians don't identify with interventionist foreign policy.

The solution therefore lies in enabling DFAIT and other departments (e.g. DND) to better sort, consolidate and manage the intelligence and information sought and received from friendly countries and partner sources.

### **Analysis**

There is more, of course, to intelligence and information than their production. Once generated, these data - whether quantitative, qualitative, speculative, or prospective - require critical review. The degree to which intelligence and information received will be acknowledged as valid and reliable, consolidated, retained and integrated for foreign policy and/or foreign operation purposes all need to be determined. A country's foreign intelligence analytic capability is therefore a potentially powerful tool. Although Canada can admit to a paucity in foreign intelligence and information production, it can admit as well to its analytic capability potential. The African Great Lakes crisis was an opportunity to put the latter capability to the test.

DND, the PCO, CIDA and DFAIT all produced analyses throughout the AGL crisis. At DFAIT, ISO, GAF/GAFX, and IDC were involved in analyzing intelligence and information. Most interviewees noted the Department's performance in this respect and, given the intelligence and information obtained, ratings ranged from fair to excellent.

**DFAIT's Intelligence analytic capability** is privileged by the departmental mandate and the political and economic function which DFAIT harbours. Its lead in diplomatic relations, its presence in dozens of countries through ambassadorial or consular presence, and its institutionalization of political / multilateral and geographic / bilateral functions at headquarters give the Department an edge in issue- and region-specific knowledge and expertise. The organization also benefits from the cross-fertilization of personnel which rotation is designed to yield. Thus DFAIT is well equipped to submit foreign intelligence and information to analysis.

During the AGL crisis, DFAIT's Task Force did turn to its in-house expertise, experienced officers and knowledge-based functions for critical data and conjunctural reviews, and in this respect it deserves to be commended. DFAIT/ISO's analyses were well received. Interviewees also commended GAF/GAFX's daily sitrep contribution.

Such positive comments were not made without reservation. One heard from most interviewees an acknowledgement of the difficulty in either reconciling conflicting data, consolidating in-coming intelligence from

different sources and in discerning political agendas in the intelligence received.

If the disparity in in-coming intelligence presented a challenge to DFAIT - and to all involved in Canada , the interdepartmental disagreements over which reading to retain further exacerbated the problem. Clearly, these difficulties noticeably impeded Canada's and DFAIT's crisis decision-making and management processes.

There is a need to augment operational mechanisms by which in-coming intelligence and information is critically reviewed in a comparative and contextualized perspective and in light of its originator's political agenda. The need for an effective and comprehensive operational foreign intelligence analysis also begs for a need to consolidate data . Indeed, Canadian departments pooling their efforts to support a multinational initiative would benefit from working from a **common foreign intelligence reading**.

An ex-post look at the foreign intelligence analytic exercise at DFAIT also reveals other problems. For one, interdepartmental disagreements over foreign intelligence betray not only a lack in consolidation but also issues of the existence of an interdepartmental strategic approach to foreign intelligence gathering and analysis. A concerted approach to foreign intelligence in Canada would present distinct advantages beyond the obvious ones of limiting duplication and facilitating operational coordination.

First, recognizing Canada's inability to generate foreign intelligence should not rule out **posts' ability to verify, confirm** or even flesh out information and intelligence obtained from a partner source. These Canadian "eyes and ears" - and "minds" - in the field present Canadian departments involved in international operations with privileged opportunities to benefit from DFAIT's personnel's proximity to a given field situation, to its ready access to local and national media's reporting on the situation, to its appreciation of a country or region's leader and people's voices with regards to a situation, etc..

DFAIT of course is likely to be the department most attuned to this potential. The extent to which it supports, fosters, and draws from this resource is a worthy issue. Other departments' appreciation of this field resource is not readily apparent in this study. The absence of a concerted strategic interdepartmental approach to tapping this resource is likely to inhibit any

Canadian foreign intelligence review and analysis.

Second, the current decentralization of foreign intelligence analytic activities to the PCO, DND, DFAIT (and elsewhere?) inhibits the pursuit of a common focus at any given time. The decentralization, as it stands today, displays few linkages by which departments can tap effectively into each other's efforts and thus benefit from the wide scope a decentralized function potentially presents. Indeed, intelligence management during the African Great Lakes crisis quickly revealed the extent to which **department-specific intelligence functions** seldom dialogue or share work in progress and work completed. Given Canada's visibility during the crisis and the brisk pace with which events unfolded, the benefits of having an orchestrated interdepartmental foreign intelligence analytic exercise would have been welcome. It would have given Canada some of the clout it lacked in international fora as well greater confidence in its decision-making and management processes.

The decentralized foreign intelligence analytic capability, as it stood during the AGL crisis - and still today, also raises questions of **duplication and relevance**. In the absence of a coordinated approach, work duplication is more likely than not, especially in a time of crisis - unless of course the various departments involved proceed on the basis of significantly different intelligence data and readings. Should the latter occur, then relevance becomes an issue. If analytic exercises are pursued on the basis of intelligence disputed by other departments, then the central decision making group, the Interdepartmental Task Force, will be hard pressed to choose one over another. Moreover, the departments housing an intelligence function would have spent precious crisis management time and resources spinning analyses that might not support the intelligence reading the centre would have had to choose.

Clearly, the benefits of the deployment of a concerted interdepartmental foreign intelligence function are there. To those stated above, one can point to the added advantage of an **interdepartmental cross-fertilization** of perspectives, ideas and insights.

Another issue raised by a look at the foreign intelligence exercise at DFAIT during the Great Lakes crisis points to a **confidence problem**. Some interviewees felt that DFAIT and the Interdepartmental Task Force tended to trust foreign analyses to the detriment of Canadian or DFAIT intelligence

readings, particularly at times when the Canadian analysis differed from views commonly accepted in the international community. Some ventured that Canada's lack of a foreign intelligence operation undermines the strength of its analyses. Others suggested that, in spite of its new leadership role, Canada had not yet come fully into its own. In this respect, it still relied on established or popular lines rather than argue in favour of its own.

### **4.3.3**

#### **Communication**

Communication is information flow, consultation, query, debate, and is an inextricable component of decision-making. In the best of times, it is key to effective management. In times of crisis, communication largely determines an organization's ability to deal with fluidity, intensity and contingencies.

This report identified communication earlier (section 3.4) as one of DFAIT's principal activities during the crisis. It warrants closer attention however as its exercise was implicit in all coordination, consultation and delivery efforts. A look at communication within DFAIT, between DFAIT and the Interdepartmental Task Force, between DFAIT and its posts, with the international community, and with the media will reveal strengths and weaknesses, and confirm what most suspected - that a sustained and conscientious effort is required to maintain open and collaborative communication channels.

#### **Internal**

Communication within DFAIT during the African Great Lakes crisis was rated fair to good by most interviewees, though all acknowledged that its practice had to be altered to fit crisis management imperatives. Indeed, it quickly became evident to Task Force members that the brisk pace at which events were taking place imposed a greater reliance on verbal communication.

Crisis management relied heavily on verbal exchanges in and out of meetings and briefings to keep all involved updated. Its advantages were that it was fast, flexible, informal and personal. It had the disadvantage of leaving behind little written record of discussions, decisions, or tasking to consult or review, either during or after the crisis.

Recourse to verbal communication to this extent is counter-cultural at DFAIT in regular times. The relative ease with which task force members adapted to a verbal-favoured mode is thus worthy of note. Many interviewees found

that recourse to verbal communication encouraged greater focus at meetings as well as regular attendance. Missing a meeting or a particular discussion at a meeting during the crisis meant missing out on critical information, decision-making and tasking. Absence could not be compensated by reading minutes or highlights as time (rather the lack thereof) precluded the production of written support. Being in the 'information loop' during the crisis required nothing short of timely physical presence. In fact, many found that the rapid pace of events was such that missing but one meeting was enough to fall out of the 'loop'.

Heavy reliance on verbal communication also seems to have facilitated group dynamics within the task force. All interviewed expressed great satisfaction at the manner in which meetings were held. The fast-paced situation required quick decision-making and positioning, and the tone was set early for open and frank discussion at meetings. All questions, issues, problems and set-backs raised were time-sensitive, and all required focused and productive attention - which they received.

There is no doubt that the disposal of hierarchy and constraints of formal rank set conditions conducive to productive communication at meetings and work sessions. Open and frank verbal communication in turn ensured the effectiveness of non-hierarchical team work, and it did so to the extent that it became one of the task force's better assets.

As expected, there was of course written material. Its volume seems to have been little affected by a greater reliance on verbal communication than usual. Most of it was issue-focused and classified. Daily sitreps, MNF- and field-related updates were cited as key documents for the many meetings that occurred in a day. Many task force members were also tasked regularly to produce written option and/or prospective pieces for later discussion at DFAIT or at Interdepartmental Task Force meetings. Written material also come in from other Canadian departments and partner sources. Together these documents constituted the written trail of the AGL crisis.

Although task force members were on most distribution lists, the departmental effort suffered from an absence of an identified and tasked central information depository. No division or officer was given the task of assembling and distributing all documents pertaining to the crisis. IDC quickly improvised itself as "central clearing house for crisis information" and the service was well used. Yet the need remained for an identified

depository enabled with support staff and officer level resource to combine organization, clarification, and substantive appreciation of in-coming documents.

On another note, some interviewees deplored that classified material still has no other means of dissemination than on paper, and argued in favour of a secure electronic medium.

E-mail was used extensively throughout out the crisis but it is unclear whether or not its usage was more extensive than usual. A task force e-mail address was issued but few made use of it. This could lead one to conclude that recourse to e-mail during the crisis remained within the parameters of habitual management networks.

Finally, if Task Force member communication was well-rated, communication between the latter and the rest of DFAIT seems to have been uneven at best. Bureaus and divisions not directly involved in the crisis but concerned in one respect or another found themselves more often than not out of the information loop. And, in absence of a clear communication link between the Task Force and the organization, recent African Great Lakes-related research and analysis material produced by units other than those involved had no channel by which to make itself known. A crisis-specific central information depository could have bridged such gaps by issuing department-wide calls for documents and seeking out relevant on-going and/or completed work.

### ***Internal - to Posts***

Communication between Headquarters and its Posts also received uneven reviews. If the crisis presented time-sensitive situations that may have called for different communication procedures than usual, posts were still privileged sources of field and/or international information. Instances of disregard of post input/feedback strained the communication link between headquarters and posts.

For example, although African posts were kept informed by headquarters on questions pertaining to MNF mobilization progress, posts' policy and/or strategic input, based on their assessment of the field situation, was not seen to have been taken account of - a situation described as quite unlike the Gulf War where post input was sought and highly regarded.

In other instances, some posts (on all continents) were overlooked in bilateral dialogue between Canada and the contributor or partner country. In some cases, contributing countries reached Ottawa directly rather than communicating through the Canadian Embassy. In other cases, Ottawa bypassed its own Embassy and spoke directly with counterparts, informing Embassy staff, only later, if at all. In other cases yet, Ottawa neglected its region-coordinating post to confer directly with its smaller outfits for matters as significant as international conferencing.

It is clearly in DFAIT's best interest to support its posts in their assigned duties and responsibilities. It is also to its benefit to enable, support, and respect the analyses and inputs its posts generate. By failing to do so, DFAIT opens itself to thankless questions pertaining to its self-acclaimed added-value as an organization.

As crises are likely to disturb habitual communication networks between headquarters and posts, it may prove useful - if not altogether strategic- to protect the integrity of these links, and create needed mechanisms to ensure good communication links.

### ***Interdepartmental***

Communication between DFAIT and the Interdepartmental Task Force was found to be good on the whole. Interviewees did grant that the presence of DFAIT secondees at the centre facilitated rapport. Personal, professional contacts with counterparts in other departments and organizations (e.g. CIDA, the UN, DND, etc.) likewise made for prompt and frequent exchanges attuned to the pace of the crisis.

Privileged contacts aside, interdepartmental communication was uneven. Some DFAIT task force members, for example, deplored the lack of transparency DND displayed to the Department during the crisis. On the other hand, those who had established personal links with DND officials found exchanges with DND helpful and informative.

Similarly, communication with the PCO at large was, for some seeking specific information or support, a frustrating endeavour at times. Again, those with personal contacts found exchanges easier and productive. Communication with CIDA was open and collaborative, as is usually the case we were told, though 'getting through' was challenging at times. In such

instances, the benefit of established informal links was evidenced by opportunities to reach a key participant at home.

DFAIT's recent experience with crisis management confirms the importance of informal links between individuals as key to collaborative communication. In this light, the organization would do well to further acknowledge the importance of personal and informal links in institutionalized professional relationships with partners and counterparts.

### ***International***

DFAIT Task Force members gave communication with the international community mixed ratings. This study did not pursue any verification of findings with external partners in the international community. Communication was perceived as positive with most African and contributor countries. For example, African leaders and the Organization of African States leader, Salim Salim, appreciated regular contact initiated from Ottawa with a view to keep them informed of the mobilization process, especially after having voiced serious concern at having found themselves excluded from the initial motions.

Communication with some contributor countries reportedly became edgy however as events unfolded. Some contributor countries were slighted at not being included in meetings, some at apparently being excluded from the MNF, and some others not having their Embassy's phone calls returned in the heat of the action. It is not possible within the scope of this study to ascertain whether any longer term damage to specific bilateral relations was incurred.

On a technical note, international "quads" calls, telephone conferencing were noted as welcome additions to DFAIT's communication instruments. Here again, personal contacts with counterparts proved critical in facilitating productive exchanges across continents as interlocutors were more relaxed.

### ***Media***

Finally, according to DFAIT's Media Relations Office, media coverage of the Canadian-led multinational operation was somewhat poor internationally and overall good domestically. Task force members' perceptions in this regard vary; domestic media coverage was seen as positive at first and increasingly critical as time wore on, while international coverage was perceived as increasingly supportive of the initiative.

Perceptions aside, the AGL crisis gave DFAIT senior management unprecedented exposure to the media. Reviews of these contributions were quite positive from all interviewees. Similarly, the Canadian initiative inspired Ministers to speak to the media - though at times from varying perspectives. Efforts to spin a common line were nevertheless deployed from the centre. The Interdepartmental Task Force's communication appointee (from DND) gave departments a common line, as much as was possible in view of the quick pace of events.

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# 5

## ***Conclusions***

There is much to applaud in how this department managed the African Great Lakes Crisis, and to repeat in future situations of this type. High on this list is the skill and dedication brought to bear on a very unique situation. This department's added value in the Canadian bureaucracy was evident in its ability to bridge humanitarian and military issues into the political environment and context and in its well established networks throughout the world.

There are also important lessons to be learned on how to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of crisis management. Clear and commonly understood objectives are essential to avoid confusion (and tensions) of purpose and properly direct activities. In the case of a national crisis management effort, such as this, it is worthwhile to articulate the department's contribution through department-specific objectives.

A flat, participative organizational structure gleaned real benefits in this exercise, but was too lean. Resource allocation needs to be regularly reviewed, and augmented as needed. This is also relevant to administrative\secretarial support, which can be so essential to avoiding communication problems and keeping the effort moving as quickly as, in this case, did the pace events.

The production of information and intelligence proved to be a problem, as DFAIT relied on data from sources outside Canada. The lack of a domestic intelligence production capability reinforces the need for a strong, consolidated analytic capability.

A summary of lessons which can be drawn from this experience follows.

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# 6

## ***Lessons Learned***

It is as important to recognize what was done well in the management of this crisis, as it is to highlight areas for improvement. Both are instructive for the management of future crisis situations, although most certainly, the context will dictate the specifics or details of any crisis effort. This section summarizes the most significant strengths and weaknesses of the management of the African Great Lakes Crisis in DFAIT.

- \* *a flat, participative organizational design served the department well in managing the fast paced, unique events and in maximizing the talents of personnel in making and enacting decisions.*
  
- \* *single leadership would be more efficient and provide more consistent management.*
  
- \* *department-specific objectives should be articulated to designate clearly DFAIT's focus, and thus its internal lead and intended results.*
  
- \* *resources selected on the basis of current roles and proven knowledge and expertise enrich the department's efforts.*
  
- \* *the level of resourcing should be routinely reviewed during the crisis and augmented when necessary. Reassignment from normal responsibilities should be explicit and a separate work area should be used to remove the demands of regular work.*

- \* *a central clearing unit with both officer and administrative support should be put in place to establish distribution and phone lists, receive and distribute material, create a paper trail of key decisions, actions and meetings, manage financial and physical resource requirements, and assist with communication efforts of the Task Force, including to the rest of DFAIT.*
  
- \* *the Interdepartmental Task Force served to bridge varying interpretations of the national objective, coordinate actions across departments and provide access and proximity to the Prime Minister's office (critical to the task of corralling international support and commitments)*
  
- \* *the lack of a Canadian intelligence production capacity creates a reliance on analysis and reinforces the need for a consolidated intelligence analytical efforts, vested with the authority and confidence to produce a 'national position'.*
  
- \* *DFAIT's added value, in terms of international networks and the broader foreign policy view to bridging political, humanitarian and military concerns provided a positive contribution both strategic and operational terms, and provided a positive contribution.*

This report is submitted for Executive review. The authors welcome feedback and hope its contents prove of value.

*Heather Buchanan and Ginette Saucier*

**APPENDIX A**  
**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

# STUDY OF ZAIRE/RWANDA RELIEF EFFORT

## Terms of Reference

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study will be to document how the Zaire/Rwanda crisis of November/December 1996 was, and is being, handled by DFAIT, to assess the Department's efficiency and effectiveness in managing this issue, and to find out what lessons were, and are, being learnt. There is some urgency to undertake this study since significant levels of resources have been deployed in a very fast moving situation. There is a danger that the corporate memory will never be assembled in an accurate way. In turn, important evaluation evidence may soon be washed away by the rapidly changing tide of events.

### 2.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH BCCH

This study will complement the recently announced initiative by BCCH to document the historical record on this issue. BCCH will be compiling a comprehensive historical account of the Relief Effort. This study, by SIXE, will commence immediately, and while some historical information will be collected, the study will focus on the role of DFAIT political economic officers and is designed to facilitate analysis and evaluation, as well as deriving departmental 'lessons learnt'.

### 3.0 PROFILE OF RWANDA/ZAIRE RELIEF EFFORT

A preliminary historical account of DFAIT's management of this situation will be created. The profile will briefly recount key triggers in the Relief Effort, in terms of the international community and nationally (between Other Government Departments), to place this department's actions in context. However, the primary focus of the case study or profile will be the efforts of this Department, in terms of recording what happened, who was involved, when or at what points in time, and how the issue was managed.

Elements to be captured in this profile, and form the basic structure of the report include:

- mandate/objectives
- structure
- resources
- activities

and how all of these elements have evolved over the life of the effort.

## 4.0 ISSUES

Concurrent with the collection of information for the creation of a profile, this study will explore specific evaluative issues. It is important to place this study in perspective and clearly define the scope of the issues which can be managed within an internal evaluation effort of this size, and timing.

First, the client for this evaluation is Senior Management within DFAIT, specifically sponsored by MME. As such the scope of analysis, conclusions and recommendations will be restricted to DFAIT's role in the Relief Effort. Next, it is felt to be important to quickly capture the way in which this effort was managed and administered, in order not to lose critical, non documented information. This will necessarily restrict the depth and breadth of analysis, confining the study to the following specific issues:

### 1. Objectives

- \* What objectives were set for Canada's intervention, and, within that framework, what were DFAIT's objectives? To what extent, did DFAIT achieve its objectives?

### 2. Information Management

- \* To what extent did DFAIT have in place appropriate information, contacts and analysis to provide contextual advise on
  - (a) strategic issues
  - (b) operational issues

### 3. Issue Management

- \* How was the organization positioned to respond to the needs of this effort? What ad hoc organizational groups and processes were put in place and how were they aided or constrained by the established structure, processes and systems?

### 4. Communications

- \* Was there adequate communication within DFAIT, between DFAIT and the Missions, and from DFAIT to external partners, stakeholders and clients?

**APPENDIX B**  
**DFAIT'S TASK FORCE**  
**ORIGINAL ORGANIZATION CHART**

## 5.0 APPROACH

1. **Executive sponsorship** - approval of Terms of Reference from USS/MME.
2. **Communication** - E-mail message to key participants (and potential interviewees) in the Relief Effort, announcing the study, requesting cooperation and attaching the Terms of Reference for comments (distribution list for the communique is attached).
3. **File Search and Scan**
4. **Develop Interview Guide**
5. **Conduct Interviews**
6. **Lessons Learnt Workshops**
7. **Report Findings to Executive Committee**

## 6.0 STUDY RESULTS OR OUTPUTS

This study is expected to yield two specific outputs - a case study or profile of the effort and a document detailing key lessons learnt, in relation to the four issues identified above.

### Case Study

This narrative document will contain factual information on how the Relief Effort was managed in this department. Triggers and key events occurring outside DFAIT will be appended in a detailed chronology. The focus of the case study will be the structure, processes, activities and resources expended on the Relief Effort from this Department.

The Case Study will provide a preliminary description and chronology of DFAIT actions which will serve three main purposes:

- (i) to provide information which would assist BCCH in its more in-depth and ex post historical documentation,
- (ii) to be massaged (at a future date) into a learning vehicle, to be used in training political economic officers, and
- (iii) to form the basis, on which the workshops would be held to identify lessons learned.

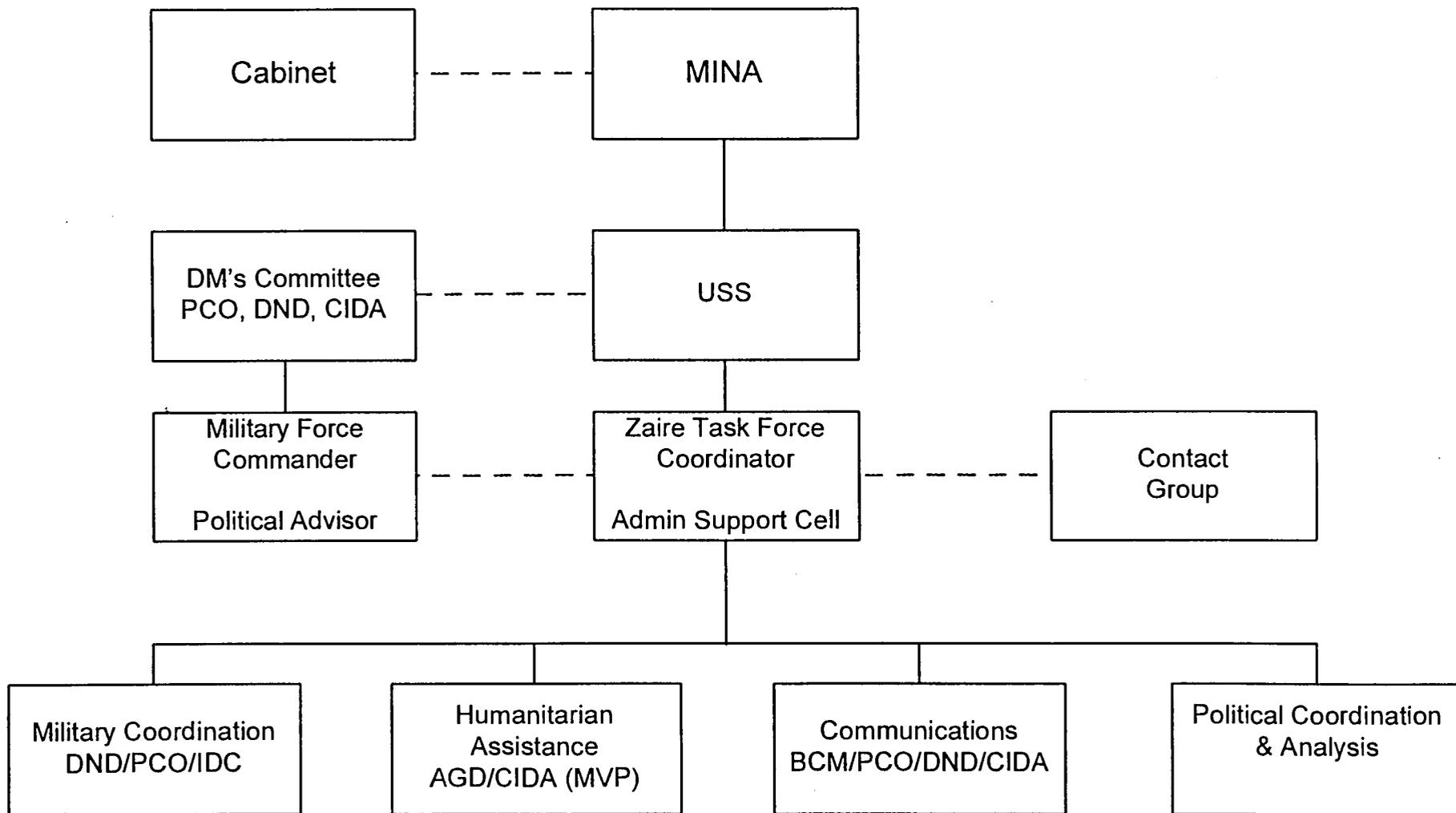
## Lessons Learnt

A report will be prepared for Executive Committee providing a concise view of important lessons to be learned from this effort. The report will primarily focus on lessons to be gleaned internally from this experience, where personnel are to be applauded for their efforts and how to improve on the management of this type of issue in future.

This report will be derived from information collected during the interviews and the results of the workshops to be held with key participants. The workshops will allow for verification and scrutiny of the case study, as well as discussion on the three issues under review here. This methodology is designed to capture and synthesize the key lessons to be derived with each issue, both strategically and operationally.

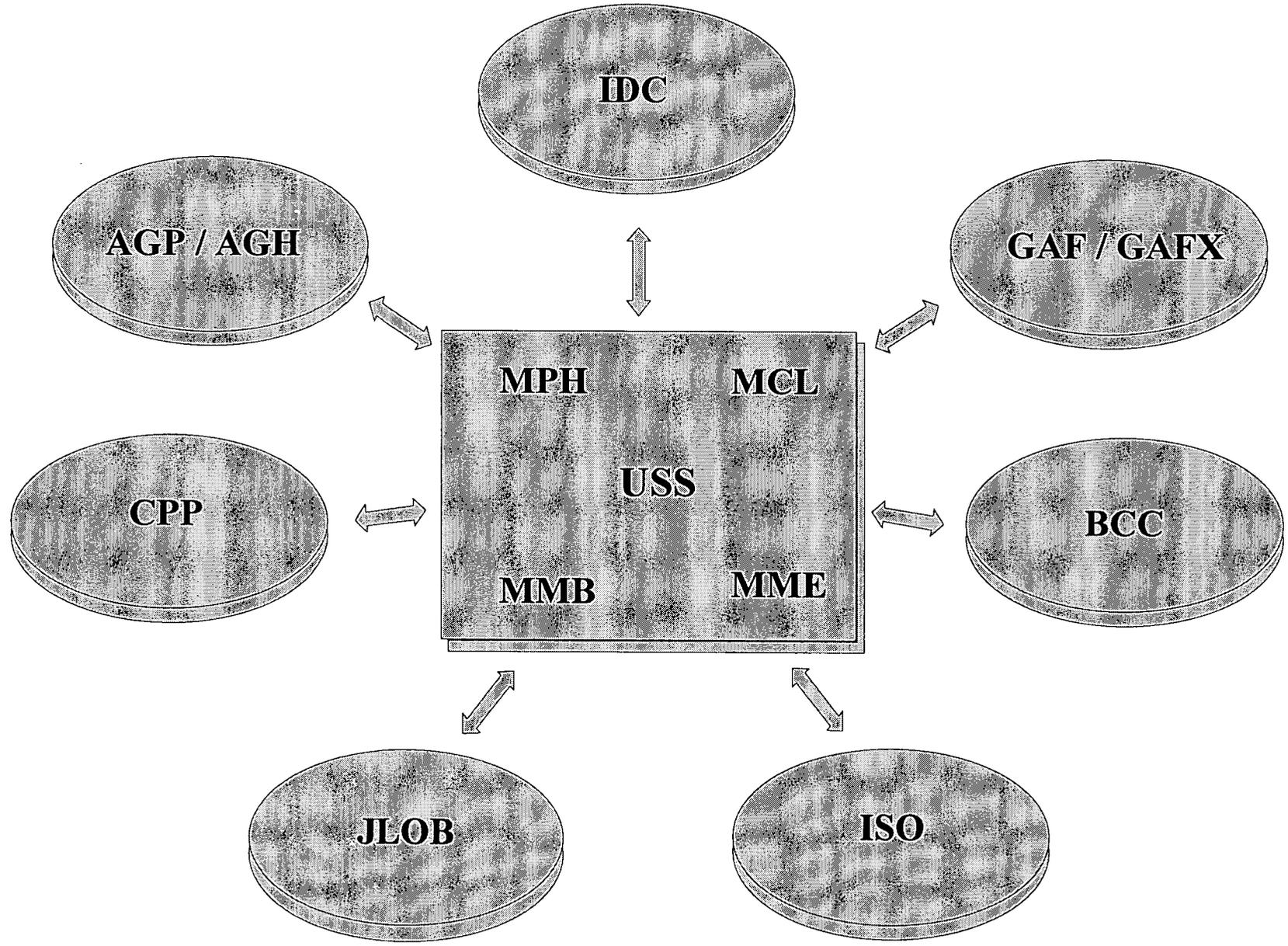
The Lessons Learnt Report will also append anecdotal suggestions and important messages concerning the management of this Relief Effort from an *international* and *inter departmental* standpoint. DFAIT experience and expertise will provide valuable insights into these aspects of the Relief Effort which will have impacted the way in which efforts were organized within DFAIT. Opportunities and constraints within the international and inter departmental realm may also reveal the basis for further study or review.

# Zaire Task Force

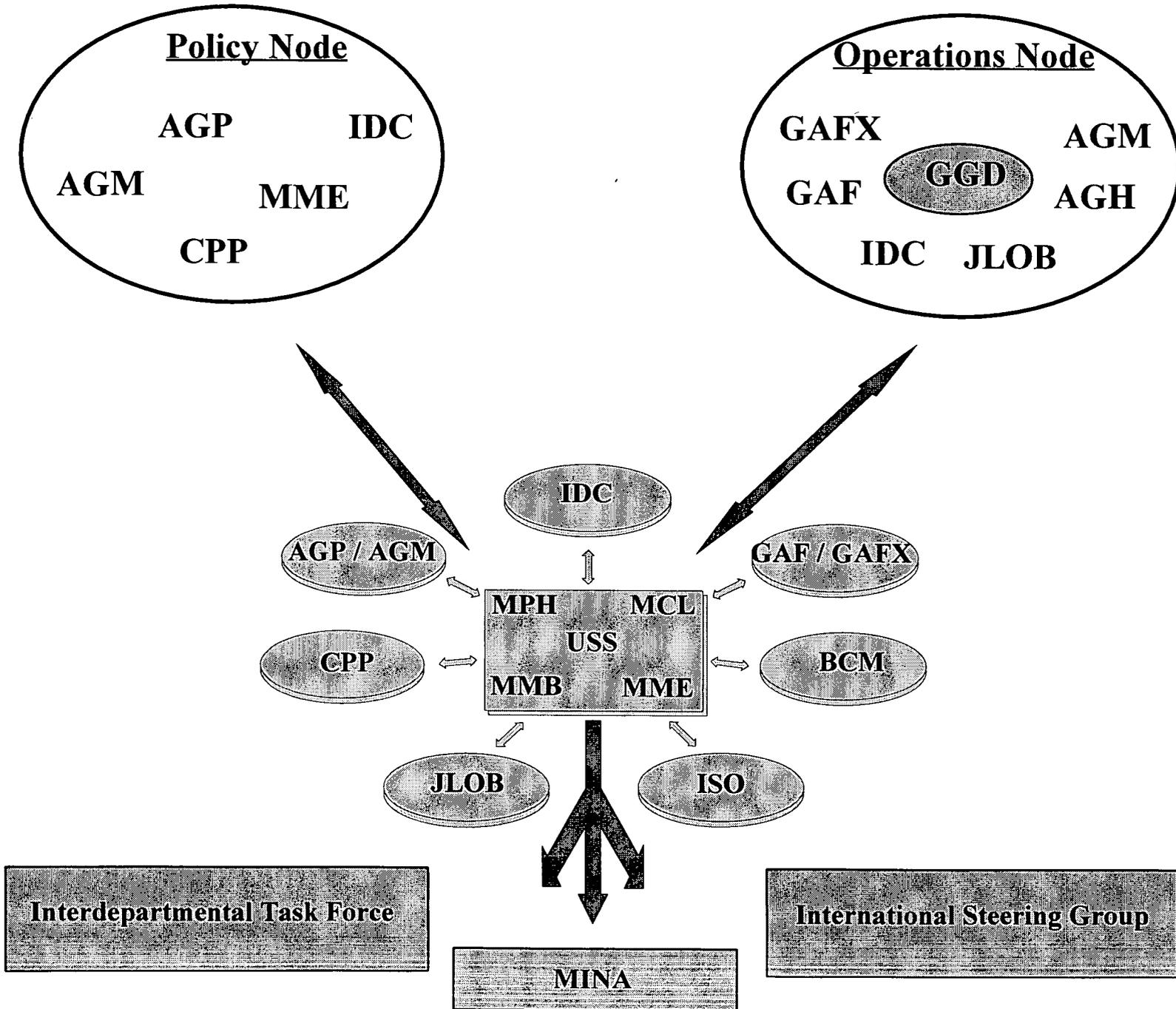


**APPENDIX C**  
**DFAIT'S TASK FORCE**  
**REVISED ORGANIZATION CHARTS**

# AFRICAN GREAT LAKES CRISIS - ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# AFRICAN GREAT LAKES CRISIS - ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE



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