

## Africa Report by Douglas DeGroot

### Eastern Congo Hit by Destabilization

*The British empire reactivates its attack on nation-building in the region.*

The London-based British imperial financial cartel has renewed a revolt in North Kivu, a province in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C.), as part of its overall strategy to eliminate nation-states in Africa and plunder the region's raw materials. Rwanda-backed anti-government rebels, led by Laurent Nkunda, surrounded Goma, the capital of North Kivu, on Oct. 29. Nkunda demanded that Congo's President, Joseph Kabila, negotiate with him directly, because Nkunda objects to a \$9 billion deal that the large, mineral-rich, but desperately poor country has made with China. The deal will provide urgently needed infrastructure to aid in development.

Since Nkunda launched his latest offensive Oct. 26, the effects have been devastating. After seeing UN peacekeepers moving their civilian personnel out as the rebels advanced, people in and around Goma fled their homes, and have been without food and water, and forced to sleep outside, with many children sick with diarrhea, according to one victim who fled with his family.

After the removal of former South African President Thabo Mbeki from office on Sept. 20, the British now face fewer impediments to this kind of destabilizing activity in Africa, because Mbeki was committed to preventing the British financial cartel from using whipped-up conflicts to carry out its goal of implementing a genocidal Dark Age in Africa. Under Mbeki, South African peacekeeping troops had been involved in several African countries, and Mbeki himself, or South African mediators, had intervened in other conflicts throughout the continent.

In 1998, rebels backed by Rwanda and Uganda invaded eastern D.R.C., and were able to proceed all the way across the country, which is as large as Europe, to the capital, Kinshasa. There they were turned back by Namibian, Zimbabwean, and Angolan troops which came to the aid of the government. In 2003, a peace agreement was finally reached, and the last Ugandan and Rwandan troops left the country.

The next year, Nkunda, who was formerly a general in the D.R.C. army, became a rebel based in North Kivu. North and South Kivu provinces have been dominated by anti-Rwandan militias who fled to the D.R.C., and anti-D.R.C. rebel groups, such as Nkunda's National Council for the Defense of the People.

Nkunda controls an area rich in natural resources. He gets his funds by running illegal mining operations in the region: The stolen minerals are smuggled out of the D.R.C. to be marketed primarily in Rwanda, where the mineral cartel gets the minerals at reduced rates. The amount of minerals leaving the D.R.C. in this manner is not insignificant. A 2001 UN report indicated that in an 18-month period before the Rwandan army left the D.R.C., it had made \$250 million from coltan (columbite-tantalite) sales alone. Coltan is a valuable mineral that is used in cell phones and computer chips. North Kivu, the most strife-riven province in the D.R.C., has five key mineral resources: coltan, diamonds, copper, cobalt, and gold.

Thus, a self-funding rebellion has been put in place that makes the province ungovernable. In addition, Nkunda

is obviously getting a lot of help. His forces are better trained and better armed than those of the government. He also appears to have good intelligence cooperation, allowing him to use hit-and-run tactics which give him a big advantage over the more numerous government troops.

Nkunda must think he has a good future by making the region ungovernable, a condition which permits him to continue his rogue mining operations (in which desperate people work in hideous conditions). He claims to have turned down a \$2.5 million offer from the government, in return for going into exile.

He may also have gotten support from European royal families' environmentalist movement. On Aug. 13, a Belgian prince, Emmanuel de Merode, was sworn in as director of the 3,000-square-mile Virunga National Park in North Kivu. On Aug. 28, Nkunda started his offensive. Then, on Sept. 3, a week after government troops had engaged Nkunda's forces near Virunga, the government pulled out 1,000 troops from near the park, after negotiations with de Merode, who said it was better for the mountain gorillas to have fewer human beings around. This cleared the way for Nkunda to easily advance on Goma.

The conflict in eastern Congo, since 1998 known as the "Great War," has killed more people—mostly from disease and starvation—than any conflict since World War II. The International Rescue Committee put the number at 5.4 million in a January 2008 report.

British Foreign Secretary David Miliband and French Foreign Minister, Bernard Kouchner arrived in Kinshasa on Oct. 31. Miliband is proposing that President Kabila talk directly with British stooge Nkunda, just as Nkunda has demanded. French President Nicolas Sarkozy, however, has pledged full support to Kabila.