

Africa Report by Douglas DeGroot

Sovereignty at Stake in Congo Crisis

Southern African nations have agreed to immediately deploy a Military Advisory Team to advise Congo's armed forces.

Confronted with a large-scale destabilization being whipped up in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (D.R.C.) by the British London-based Anglo-Dutch financial cartel, the Nov. 9 summit of the 15-member Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) in South Africa, approached the issue of the destabilization of the D.R.C. from the highest level, concentrating on strengthening the D.R.C. government, and was not sidetracked by the pretexts given by the manipulated anti-government rebels for their actions.

In its final communiqué, the summit warned that the security situation “is deteriorating in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo,” and that this “is affecting peace and stability in the SADC and the Great Lakes Region” of Africa. It said that because “many agreements entered into regarding peace and security in the Great Lakes Region were not implemented because of the intransigence of Laurent Nkunda [the rebel who broke a ceasefire on Aug. 28, which began the latest round of violence in North Kivu Province], the DRC Armed Forces need to be assisted in order to protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country.”

The resolutions of the summit which call for aid to the D.R.C. Army, and other military deployments to help secure the country, demonstrate how seriously the SADC nations are viewing the threat being mounted against the D.R.C.

Former South African President Thabo Mbeki, who has always sought

to avoid providing a pretext for the British financial cartel to intervene in crises it creates, and thus undermine the sovereignty of African nations, also attended.

As soon as Nkunda's forces advanced to the outskirts of Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu, on Oct. 28, the British Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with responsibility for Africa, Asia, and the United Nations, Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, began calling for direct British military intervention (see *EIR*, Nov. 7). The D.R.C. Army is poorly equipped, and underpaid. The government has thus aided pro-government militias, and the British have called for the disarming of these groups, putting them on a par with the rebel operation, which is run from outside the country.

Since independence in 1960, the D.R.C. has been prevented by the British empire from using its vast mineral wealth to develop its economy. In return for no development, its raw materials have been continuously looted. In the ten years since the departure of longtime dictator Joseph Mobutu, the industrialized nations have done nothing to aid in building up the Army, or the economy, which could have made the D.R.C. capable of preventing crises like the present one. Nkunda, who is stealing minerals from the area he controls, is on the same anti-development track; he stated that he objects to the D.R.C.'s collaboration with China, in an enormous development-for-minerals deal.

The British media, and its lackeys such as the *New York Times*, have been publicizing the catastrophic effects of the fighting triggered by the Nkunda's rebels on the civilian population, as a reason for mounting an international intervention.

Though the D.R.C. population is frustrated with the UN force, since it is not very effective at protecting the civilian population from the hit-and-run attacks of Nkunda's forces, one D.R.C. source said, “they are not NATO-grade troops, but they are better than nothing.” The British press has pointed out that if the UN force in the D.R.C. were discredited, it would have far reaching consequences for Africa. The London *Financial Times* headline on Nov. 11 was: “Congo rebels 'aim to drive out UN.’” In a threatening letter to the UN, Nkunda said he wants to drive out the UN peacekeeping force, known as Monuc.

A few days after the SADC summit, on Nov. 12, Angolan Foreign Minister Georges Chicoty announced on Angolan National Radio that Angola would send troops to eastern Congo in defense of the government.

However, although the southern African governments are strongly committed to building up and stabilizing the D.R.C., the situation is fraught with danger.

With the collapse of the globalized economy, the consequent drop in the prices of petroleum and minerals will make it much more difficult for these countries to aid the D.R.C., while improving their domestic economies. The crisis has been set up to ensnare anybody who tries to deal with it.

The conflict also threatens to worsen the D.R.C.'s shaky financial situation. Sixty mining concessions may not materialize because mining companies could pull back from their investment plans. “Deals may start to unravel,” reported the *Wall Street Journal*.