

June 5, 2003



fewer
forum on early warning
and early response

URGENT MEASURES FOR ITURI REGION, DRC

The deployment of a multinational peace-keeping force for Ituri, a region in north-eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, signals a key turning point in the DRC peace process. The interim administration of Ituri, created after the conclusion of the Ituri Pacification Commission, is the only ethnically balanced and broadly supported institution capable of acting as a catalyst for reconciliation. While waiting for the arrival of the multinational force, **members of the interim administration are currently protected in the MONUC compound, their lives threatened by armed militias.** It is necessary to follow up and ensure the full implementation of the Dar-Es-Salaam agreement and its harmonisation with the national peace process.

We believe it is within the obligations of the European Union to communicate to all concerned parties that as signatories to the Dar-Es-Salaam accords, they are required to follow the spirit and the letter of these accords. Any declarations contrary to this are unacceptable, as well as any actions or declarations that are made against the UN Security Council resolutions. This includes the use of local radio to incite violence and threaten the population. Authors of crimes such as intimidation of local authorities or international peace-keepers, extra-judicial assassinations, looting, rape and violations of International Humanitarian Law will be held responsible for their actions.

An interim administration of Ituri has been selected by a wide local consensus, it is nationally supported and recognised by the United Nations. The interim administration is currently functioning with little or no resources and it is in a state of permanent insecurity. All military forces within and outside the town of Bunia must respect the authority of the interim administration. Failure to do so is in direct violation of the Dar-Es-Salaam accords. Threats and/ or violent acts against members of the interim administration cannot be tolerated.

Regionally, **all governments must stop arming ethnic militias in Ituri.** Regional support for demilitarisation, cantonment of armed factions, the demobilisation of child soldiers and the creation of an integrated security force is essential for a durable solution to the conflict.

On the logistical front, **the European Union force should deploy quickly** within the set date. "Every day counts. The force needs to come yesterday" (quote from a member of the interim administration). If the date is fixed on the 10th of June, the deployment of the first soldier must take place on that date. This is imperative for a population that feels it has been deceived by the International Community in the past, and is currently caught directly between the crossfire of various militias.

The deployment of a European force should also include a political component, in order to facilitate the work of the interim administration. Beginning on the first day of military deployment,

FEWER is a global coalition that provides early warning and promotes co-ordinated, early responses to violent conflict.

Board *Glenys Kinnock (Chair), Alejandro Bendaña, David Carment, Samuel Gbaydee Doe (Vice Chair), Georg Freiks, Karen Tañada, Sharon Rusu (Treasurer)*

Company Limited by Guarantee, Co. Reg. No. 3686822, UK Charity No. 1093964

fewer secretariat, old Truman brewery, 91-95 brick lane, London E1 6QN, UK

tel: +44 20 7247 7022, fax: +44 20 7247 5290

secretariat@fewer.org www.fewer.org



fewer
forum on early warning
and early response

there should be political co-ordination with members of the interim administration and the political section of MONUC. This is the only way to ensure a hand-over to a functioning administration in a set time-frame, and to prevent an eventual return to chaos.

The international community has focused on the **consolidation of a national and regional peace process** since the signature of the Lusaka accords in July 1999. By January 2001, all the main belligerents were respecting a spontaneous cease-fire along the main front lines. **This “peace” has not addressed the local levels of the conflict.** Violence, looting and intimidation continue to be a part of the daily lives of habitants in eastern DRC.

The current events in Ituri have opened up a new phase in the DRC Peace Process. This new and positive development in the Congolese peace process involves focusing simultaneously on the regional, local, and national levels of the conflict. It is a formula that involves: (a) a local administration recognised as legitimate by the majority of armed and non-armed groups; (b) the deployment of a robust international peace-keeping force; and (c) international legal accountability for perpetrators of war crimes.

The political and humanitarian challenges that necessitated the arrival of the multi-national force are immense; national, international, and local actors must continue to support the work of the interim administration. **This combination of military might and political will are the beginnings of a more effective solution to the Congolese crisis.**

AIP and FEWER, with other partner organisations, are working together with the interim administration in order to hold a workshop to develop an operational plan for reconciliation activities. The project will start as soon as security conditions permit.

FEWER is a global coalition that provides early warning and promotes co-ordinated, early responses to violent conflict.

Board *Glenys Kinnock (Chair), Alejandro Bendaña, David Carment, Samuel Gbaydee Doe (Vice Chair), Georg Frerks, Karen Tañada, Sharon Rusu (Treasurer)*

Company Limited by Guarantee, Co. Reg. No. 3686822, UK Charity No. 1093964
fewer secretariat, old truman brewery, 91-95 brick lane, london E1 6QN, uk
tel: +44 20 7247 7022, fax: +44 20 7247 5290
secretariat@fewer.org www.fewer.org



fewer
forum on early warning
and early response

FEWER is a global coalition that provides early warning and promotes co-ordinated, early responses to violent conflict.

Board *Glenys Kinnock (Chair), Alejandro Bendaña, David Carment, Samuel Gbaydee Doe (Vice Chair), Georg Frerks, Karen Tañada, Sharon Rusu (Treasurer)*

Company Limited by Guarantee, Co. Reg. No. 3686822 , UK Charity No. 1093964
fewer secretariat, old truman brewery, 91-95 brick lane, london E1 6QN, uk
tel: +44 20 7247 7022, fax: +44 20 7247 5290
secretariat@fewer.org www.fewer.org