

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4019/07
by Margrietus van den Berg (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Revisitation of Congolese mining contracts

In June 2007 the Congolese Minister of Mines inaugurated an interministerial commission responsible for the 'revisitation' (review) of the mining contracts inherited from the past. The commission is to complete its work in three months and make recommendations to the Congolese government. Non-governmental institutions are providing technical support. A proper and inclusive revisitation process of the mining contracts is fundamental to restoring good governance and transparency in the Congolese mining sector and providing the Congolese government with the revenue necessary to rebuild the country.

1. So far only the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs has supported this commission. Is the European Commission prepared to express its support for this initiative?
2. Does the Commission agree that revising the existing mining contracts is a prerequisite for successful implementation of the Commission's 9-million-euro budget for a governance programme on natural resource management?
3. The European Investment Bank (EIB) is considering investing 100 million euro in a US mining giant's¹ Tenke Fungurume copper mining project. The mining contract underlying this project is under revision by the Congolese interministerial commission. By doing so, the EIB risks prejudging the outcome of the revision process. Does the Commission agree that, in accordance with basic principles of good governance, the EIB should postpone consideration of funding for mining projects in the DRC until the revision process is concluded?

¹ <http://www.eib.org/projects/pipeline/2007/20070004.htm>