

EAST AFR. PROT

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Africa Office	Anglo Belgian Cooperation
1915	
Dec. 1st.	Despatches from the Committee
Last previous Paper. 55650f Lahna L. Afr. H. Comm.	Have as to proposals for co-operation
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Partly ✓</p>	<p><del>L. Schuster</del> <del>L. Lambert</del> <del>L. Bred</del> 3/21/15 By G. Fiddes See also 5494 &amp; 55650 on</p> <p>The points which emerge are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) That Belgian officers are coming over (whose name) to discuss the question of co-operation with us.</li> <li>(2) That Col. Finckh wants to undertake an independent offensive, but that the Belgian Govt. would prefer to wait until their offensive can synchronize with our offensive. This is obviously the only right way, but the question arises: will the Belgians be willing to wait if our offensive is delayed for a long time? (I take it that we will deal with the concrete proposal put forward by the Belgian Govt.)</li> </ol>
Next subsequent Paper.	

It is stated that all the Belgians  
have not been withdrawn from the  
S. frontier, and that a Battalion  
still remains at Kitope between  
Lake Tanganyika Rivers. But this  
appears to be a considerable distance  
from the river and it is clear that  
we cannot now rely on the Belgians  
to be quite for co-operation, and  
hardly even for emergency assistance.

Partly (we can only wait  
and see what the War Office do)

Yr 2/2/15  
Copies of these letters have been  
sent to the W.O. who will no  
doubt show them to Mr. H. Smith-Corner.

H. J. R.  
3/2/15

I hope the W.O. will discuss fully &  
frankly with the Belgians & that it will  
be agreed that the front shall be made  
from all sides at once. It seems more  
plausible to the former's hands for the  
Belgians to attack say in December &  
for us to attack say [in] February.

James Callaghan  
P.M.

We had better have the Belgian question  
settled close. We are exposed to this & go  
the other side is between them.

W. 3/1/15  
P.M. 3/1/15  
Amv. 10/11

The other positions to be held

In any further communication on this subject, please quote

No. 17980/1915

The Under-Secretary of State  
Foreign Office,  
London.

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*Confidential*

The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copy of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,

December 1, 1915.

Reference to previous correspondence:

Letter from Foreign Office: November 23 (163318)

Description of Inclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
<p>Hon. Ministers at Home, No. 244 November 26</p>	<p>Operations in E. Africa</p>

(Similar letter sent to Director of Military Operations)

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SECRET.

ov. 20, 1915

Sir,

The communication of telegrams recently forwarded to me respecting military operations in East Africa gave rise to some discussion and I took the opportunity of explaining the views of His Majesty's Government in accordance with the general considerations set forth in your despatch No. 146, Secret, (163316/15) of the 2nd. instant. I said that as the Belgian Government had definitely decided to withdraw all their troops from Rhodesia the question of joint operations on that front had ceased. His Majesty's Government were, however, considering plans for an offensive from British East Africa and when a decision was reached it might be possible to propose a scheme of cooperation. They were fully alive to the necessity for an early decision and to the advantage of close cooperation with the Belgian forces, and they would not fail when the moment arrived to provide for adequate discussion between the two Staffs.

Yours faithfully,  
K. M. D.

Right Hon.  
Sir A. Grey, P.C., Bart., &c.

meanwhile it would, in their opinion, serve no useful purpose to initiate spasmodic and partial joint operations such as the suggested naval demonstration against the German East African coast.

It appears from the information received by the Belgian Government that the concentration of the forces under Colonel Lombour in the Fivu district is nearly completed, he has abandoned the idea of cooperation with a British force and it is calculated that he will commence an independent offensive about the middle of next month. In view however of a possible movement from British East Africa it is now suggested that Colonel Lombour might postpone his advance and that a combined attack could be made at a later date. This would provide a force sufficiently strong to give a good prospect of such a success as would have the most important results. The Belgian Government are convinced that the occasion is one of which advantage should be taken.

The exact proposal made to me for the moment, and earnestly recommended, is that the Officer Commanding

the troops in British East Africa should be authorized with the least possible delay to inform Colonel Lombard that plans for an advance upon the German colony are being considered. And to suggest that pending a decision in regard thereto should be postponed. Colonel Lombard and his staff at Tabora would on his side be informed that the suggestion might be made, but he would be left complete liberty of action. The British and Belgian headquarters are without reach of one another and as a matter of fact a regular interchange of communications has been kept up between the officers in command. There would thus be no difficulty in conveying the message to Colonel Lombard.

With regard to the telegram forwarded in your despatch No. 120 (1-11-1914) to which I have already referred I may point out that the wording of the same, at any rate as paraphrased, gives the impression that all Belgian troops have been removed from the neighbourhood of the Congo-Rhodesian frontier. This is not exactly the case, as the battalion mentioned in the last paragraph of my despatch No. 120, of Sept. 15, remains at Kitope, between lakes

Loero and Ianganyika, at the extreme southern point of the  
along and is available for defence of the province.

I have the honour to be,

with the highest respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant

(sd) E. H. Valliers