
Introduction

The Security Council saw yet another year of intensive work, confirming the seriousness and the complexity of the matters before it. During the period under review, the Council held 219 formal meetings, of which 191 were public, in addition to 18 meetings with troop-contributing countries. The Council also held 177 consultations of the whole. During the reporting period, the Council adopted 58 resolutions and 50 presidential statements.

Africa again featured prominently on the Council's agenda. The Council was regularly briefed and took appropriate actions on developments in conflict situations in Africa, such as those in Chad, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Great Lakes region, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Somalia and the Sudan. Peacebuilding efforts in Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone were reviewed on a regular basis. The Council also held a high-level debate on peace and security in Africa, and organized in June 2008 a mission to five African countries currently on the Council's agenda, namely Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia/Djibouti. Owing to developments on the ground, the Council also reviewed the situations in Kenya and Zimbabwe under the item "Peace and security in Africa", since neither situation is a formal Security Council agenda item. The Council devoted a considerable amount of work to adjusting peacekeeping mandates and/or amending sanctions regimes to make them more appropriate to the respective situations.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, received the Council's close attention, including at the Council's monthly briefings. While continuing to be fully engaged with the situation, apart from the briefings, urgent meetings, debates and open debates, the Council was not able to reach the unanimity needed for it to take any action during the current 12-month reporting period, despite the seven attempts that were presented by different delegations in due course.

The Council intensified its engagement with the Kosovo status process as developments occurred on the ground. The Council held, besides regular briefings on the situation in Kosovo and the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, meetings and consultations to consider reports on the

negotiation process between the parties on the Kosovo status process. The Council was unable to reach in December 2007 agreement on a response to the issue of Kosovo's status following an unsuccessful further round of negotiations facilitated by the European-Russian Federation-United States of America Troika. Early in 2008, besides regular meetings, the Council held emergency meetings on the latest developments in Kosovo, in particular in the light of Kosovo's declaration of independence.

The Council also devoted significant time and energy to general issues. Terrorism unfortunately remained a top concern for the Council. The Council was quick to react to all terrorist acts wherever they occurred, from Algeria to Afghanistan, and from Lebanon to Pakistan and Turkey, among others. A large portion of its work involved the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). The Council adopted resolutions extending the mandates of the latter Committee and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and adjusting the sanctions regime under resolution 1267 (1999). Other issues receiving particular Council attention included the protection of civilians in armed conflict, children and armed conflict, and women and peace and security. The work of the International Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda was discussed by the Council on several occasions, particularly in relation to their completion strategies.

Africa

Burundi

On 28 November 2007, the Council heard a briefing by the Minister of Safety and Security of South Africa, the Facilitator of the peace process in Burundi, on the peace and political process in Burundi. Speaking after the briefing, members of the Council expressed concern over the fragile peace process and hailed the role played by the Facilitator, the Regional Initiative, the African Union and the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB), as well as the Peacebuilding Commission in furthering Burundi's recovery.

On 6 December, the Council considered the second report of the Secretary-General on the activities of BINUB and heard a briefing by the Chairperson of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Johan Løvald of Norway, on the peacebuilding efforts and priorities in Burundi, and then held consultations of the whole, during which members of the Council agreed on the need to monitor the situation in Burundi closely.

On 19 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1791 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of BINUB until 31 December 2008 and called on the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-Forces nationales de libération (FNL) to refrain from any action that might lead to a resumption of hostilities and to resolve outstanding issues in a spirit of cooperation.

The political and security situation in Burundi deteriorated significantly during the first half of 2008. On 24 April, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/10), in which members of the Council expressed their serious concern at the confrontations between FNL and the National Defence Forces of Burundi, condemned the use of violence, and called on both parties to scrupulously respect the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of September 2006. The Council also called on the parties to resume their dialogue to overcome the obstacles that hindered the implementation of the Agreement and delayed the conclusion of the peace process, and expressed its support for the Regional Initiative, the South African Facilitation and the role of the Political Directorate.

On 22 May, the Council heard a briefing by the Chairperson of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Johan Løvald, in which he expressed concern about the earlier fighting between Government forces and fighters of FNL, while mentioning certain positive and promising developments such as the return of FNL to Bujumbura for the resumption of the peace process. In the ensuing consultations of the whole, the Council expressed its concerns about the situation in Burundi, welcomed the return of FNL to the capital, called on the parties concerned to show their goodwill by fully implementing the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement and returning to the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism, and supported the role and efforts of BINUB and the Peacebuilding Commission in Burundi.

After the consultations, the Council delivered a statement to the press on the situation in Burundi.

Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Over the reporting period, the Council paid great attention to the situation in Chad and the Central African Republic and the subregion. On 27 August 2007, following consultations of the whole, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/30), in which it expressed concern about the insecurity along the borders between the Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic and the threat it posed to the civilian population and the conduct of humanitarian operations. The Council also encouraged the Secretary-General and the European Union to proceed with preparations for the multidimensional presence of the United Nations and the European Union in Chad and the Central African Republic and requested the Secretary-General to study the follow-on arrangements for this multidimensional presence after a period of 12 months.

On 25 September, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1778 (2007), by which members of the Council authorized the deployment of the European Union operation (EUFOR) and decided to establish the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), for a period of one year, with a mandate to help to create a secure environment for the return of refugees and displaced persons, contribute to the protection of civilians in danger, in particular through training of elements of the Police tchadienne pour la protection humanitaire, monitor the human rights situation and facilitate the provision of humanitarian assistance.

On 7 January 2008, the Council heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet, on the situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion. In the ensuing consultations, members of the Council expressed serious concern about the security and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic and Chad as well as tensions in relations between Chad and the Sudan, hailed the cooperative efforts made by the two countries to facilitate the deployment of MINURCAT and EUFOR, and called on the international community to make further contributions to the full deployment of those missions. The Council also issued a statement to the press articulating the

shared voice of its members on the situation and the deployment of MINURCAT and EUFOR.

On 4 February, in response to the escalating attacks by armed groups against the Government of Chad, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/3) in which it strongly condemned those violent attacks, welcomed the good offices efforts made by the African Union in mediating with a view to ending the fighting and seeking a lasting solution to the crisis, urged all States in the region to abide fully by the Tripoli, Riyadh and Sirte Agreements, and reaffirmed its full support for MINURCAT and EUFOR.

On 9 April, in consultations of the whole, members of the Council voiced their concern about the volatile security situation in Chad and the ongoing tensions in Chad-Sudan relations, and welcomed the signing of the Dakar Agreement by Chad and the Sudan, while calling on both countries to fully respect their commitments under this and prior agreements. The Council also expressed its support for an early and full deployment of MINURCAT and EUFOR, as well as closer coordination between those missions and those of the United Nations in the subregion, such as the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). After the consultations, the President of the Council delivered a statement to the press expressing the concern of Council members about the volatility of the situation, especially in humanitarian terms, welcoming the progress made in the resumption of the deployment of MINURCAT and EUFOR, calling on Chad and the Sudan to normalize their relations, and encouraging the Governments of Chad and the Central African Republic to promote political dialogues in their countries.

On 16 June, the Council issued a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/22) in which it condemned the attacks conducted by Chadian armed groups since 11 June 2008 and attempts to destabilize the situation in Chad by force, demanded an immediate end to the violence, urged all parties to respect the Sirte Agreement of October 2007, expressed its full support for MINURCAT and EUFOR, and called on all States in the region to implement their commitments under the Dakar Agreement of 13 March 2008 and prior agreements.

On 27 June, in consultations of the whole, the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, François Lonseny Fall, on the situation in the Central African Republic. The Council issued a statement to the press welcoming the comprehensive peace agreement between the Central African Republic authorities and several rebel movements, signed in Libreville on 21 June, calling upon the Government and the rebel movements to fully implement the Agreements of Sirte, Birao and Libreville, and calling on all other political-military groups in the country to join the comprehensive peace agreement.

On 15 July, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed on MINURCAT by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. Members of the Council expressed their concerns about the volatile security situation in Chad as well as the humanitarian situation there, while condemning attacks on humanitarian workers. Emphasizing the importance of the political process and dialogue as the only solution to the conflict in Chad, members of the Council called upon all parties concerned in Chad to immediately renounce violence, engage in the political process and ensure safety for the operations of humanitarian workers. They also expressed full support for the deployment of MINURCAT and EUFOR and the coordination between those missions and other United Nations missions in the subregion while urging Chad and the Sudan to fully implement the Dakar Agreement and other relevant agreements.

Côte d'Ivoire

With the signing of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement in March 2007 and its supplementary agreements in November 2007, the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire entered a new stage. The Council remained actively involved, giving its support to the peace process while remaining careful not to downsize the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) prematurely and continuing measures to help to avoid a relapse into violence in the country.

On 22 October 2007, in a debate followed by informal consultations, the Council was briefed on the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso, Djibril Yipènè Bassolé, in his capacity as representative of the Facilitator of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, and by the Acting Representative of the Secretary-

General in Côte d'Ivoire, Abou Moussa. In a subsequent statement to the press by the President of the Council, members of the Council reaffirmed their full support for the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and paid tribute to the President of Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré, for his continued efforts to facilitate the peace process. Members of the Council also welcomed the initial measures taken in implementation of some elements of the Agreement, including the deployment of six mixed units, which made it possible to lift the "confidence zone" and to replace it by some UNOCI observation points on the green line. Members of the Council, however, expressed concern at the delay in the implementation of the key tasks of the Agreement, and urged the parties to meet their commitments fully and in good faith, including by taking without delay specific measures to make progress in the identification and registration of voters, the disarmament and dismantling of militias, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the restoration of State authority throughout the country, the unification and restructuring of the defence and security forces, and respect for human rights.

On 29 October, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1782 (2007), by which it renewed until 31 October 2008 the sanctions imposed by resolutions 1572 (2004) and 1643 (2005) and to extend the mandate of the Group of Experts for another year.

On 14 January 2008, the Council held a private meeting with countries contributing troops to UNOCI. In the consultations of the whole that followed, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Choi Young-Jin, briefed the Council on the recent progress in Côte d'Ivoire and underlined the importance of further implementing the key tasks, including the conduct of credible, free, fair and transparent elections within the time frame set out in the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and the supplementary agreements of 28 November 2007. The Special Representative also presented the Secretary-General's observation in his fifteenth progress report on UNOCI (S/2008/1) that the encouraging developments following the signing of the third supplementary agreement might, in due course, lead to proposals for a gradual downsizing of UNOCI troop levels.

On 15 January, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1795 (2008), by which it renewed the

mandates of UNOCI and the French forces which support it until 30 July 2008 and expressed its intention to review, by the same date, those mandates as well as the level of troops of UNOCI in the light of the progress achieved in the implementation of the key steps of the peace process.

On 29 April, in consultations of the whole, the Special Representative briefed the Council on the latest developments in Côte d'Ivoire, in particular on the preparations for the electoral process. The Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) also presented a briefing on the midterm report of the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire (S/2008/235). At a public meeting, the Council then adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/11), by which it welcomed the approval by the Ivorian authorities of the proposal of the Independent Electoral Commission to organize presidential elections on 30 November 2008, and encouraged the Ivorian parties to redouble their efforts to meet that commitment and the international community to bring continued support to that effect. The Council welcomed the signing, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, of a code of good conduct for elections by all political parties. The Council also called upon the parties to make concrete progress to promote political and security stability, in particular in the context of the forthcoming presidential elections, in such key areas as the disarmament and dismantling of militias, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the storage of weapons, the unification and restructuring of defence and security forces, and the full restoration of State authority throughout the country.

On 24 July, the Council held a private meeting with countries contributing troops to UNOCI. In the consultations of the whole that followed, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General briefed the Council on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire and related activities of UNOCI, especially on preparations for the national elections on 30 November 2008. Members of the Council in general supported and encouraged all the parties concerned to maintain the momentum of reconciliation, sustained dialogue and cooperation in the light of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and the supplementary agreements, thereby helping to lead the elections to success and keep the peace process in the best interest of the Ivorian people. There was a consensus among the Council members that the

electoral list needed to be explicitly certified by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

On 29 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1826 (2008), by which it renewed the mandates of UNOCI and the French forces which support it until 31 January 2009, in particular to support the organization in Côte d'Ivoire of free, open, fair and transparent elections, urged the political parties to fully comply with the Code of Good Conduct for elections which they had signed under the auspices of the Secretary-General, and in particular urged the Ivorian authorities to allow equitable access to public media.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 10 August 2007, the Council, condemning the continuing illicit flow of weapons within and into the Democratic Republic of the Congo, unanimously adopted resolution 1771 (2007), by which it renewed the arms embargo, as well as the travel ban and assets freeze on those who violated the embargo, until 15 February 2008. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to re-establish for a period expiring on 15 February 2008 the Group of Experts created to help to monitor illicit arms flows into the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

On 21 December, by resolution 1794 (2007), the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) until 31 December 2008. The Council also demanded that the militias and armed groups in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), ex-FAR/Interahamwe and the dissident militia of Laurent Nkunda, lay down their arms and engage in the demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration process.

The year 2008 started on a positive note with regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Congolese parties met in Goma from 6 to 23 January and agreed to a ceasefire and acts of engagement aimed at bringing peace and security to the Kivus. Welcoming that development, on 30 January, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/2) urging all parties to respect the ceasefire and to implement the commitments they had made, and encouraging the international community and regional States to fully support the dynamic launched by the Goma Conference

and the Nairobi communiqué signed in November 2007 by the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda. On the same day, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1797 (2008), by which it authorized MONUC to provide assistance to the Congolese authorities, including the National Independent Electoral Commission, in the organization, preparation and conduct of local elections, as recommended in the letters of the Secretary-General dated 11 October and 30 November 2007 (S/2007/694).

On 13 February, the Council held consultations of the whole to review the sanctions regime in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Noting that security remained fragile in the eastern part of the country, members of the Council agreed that the arms embargo pursuant to relevant resolutions of the Council must be maintained. The Council also took note of some positive developments in the country and agreed that such momentum should be further encouraged, and that the sanctions regime should be more focused and simplified.

On 15 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1799 (2008), by which it extended until 31 March 2008 the sanctions regime imposed on the armed groups and militia operating in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as the mandate of the Group of Experts for the same period.

On 31 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1807 (2008), by which it extended the sanctions regime concerning the country until 31 December 2008. It also extended the travel ban and assets freeze to individuals operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo committing serious violations of international law involving the targeting of women in situations of armed conflict. However, the resolution exempted the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo from the measures on arms previously imposed.

On 15 April, the Council held consultations of the whole and heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Alan Doss. Members of the Council commended some positive developments in the situation in the country and the assistance of MONUC in the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, as well as in capacity-building for the Government. They also

expressed their concern about the still volatile security situation, the prevalence of sexual violence in the country, and possible recurrence of violence in the Kivus.

On 23 July, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, on related activities of MONUC. Members of the Council took note of some positive developments in the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo while retaining their concerns about the still volatile security environment. Some members of the Council voiced their strong concerns about the environment of impunity in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council largely expressed its support for the continued assistance of MONUC to the peace process in the country.

Eritrea and Ethiopia

As Eritrea and Ethiopia continued not to implement the arbitration decision concerning the delimitation of their common border, the Council showed increasing concern and involvement with a view to helping the two countries to settle the dispute. On 13 November 2007, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Dmitry Titov. The consultations were followed on the same day by the adoption of a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/43), in which members of the Council urged the countries to take concrete steps to implement immediately and without preconditions the delimitation decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, taking into account commitments made regarding the Temporary Security Zone at the meeting of the Commission on 6 and 7 September 2007. The Council further called upon the parties to refrain from the use of force, to normalize their bilateral relations, to promote stability between them, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace in the region. The Council also commended the continuing operations of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The Council further expressed strong support to the Secretary-General's efforts to facilitate the processes of demarcation of the border and normalization of bilateral relations.

On 25 January 2008, during a private meeting of the Council with troop-contributing countries, the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General

in Ethiopia and Eritrea, Azouz Ennifar, presented the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/40), and briefed the Council on recent developments, the continued disagreement on the border issue, the increasing restrictions by Eritrea on UNMEE operations including the stoppage of fuel supplies since 1 December 2007, the refusal by both countries of the proposed appointment of a Special Representative and the tense security situation in the Temporary Security Zone and adjacent areas. In the ensuing consultations of the whole, members of the Council had an exchange of views and expressed their deep concern about the continuing dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

On 30 January, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1798 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of UNMEE for a period of six months, until 31 July 2008, demanded that the two countries immediately take concrete steps to complete the process launched by the Peace Agreement of 12 December 2000 by enabling physical demarcation of the border, and urged them to normalize their relations and to accept the Secretary-General's good offices.

On 15 February, in consultations of the whole, after the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the latest developments on the ground, the President of the Council delivered a statement (S/PRST/2008/7) in which the members noted that a temporary relocation of UNMEE from Eritrea had been rendered inevitable, strongly condemned the lack of cooperation by the Government of Eritrea with UNMEE, and demanded that it end all its restrictions on the Mission, while expressing their determination to consider further appropriate steps for the safety and protection of the Mission and its personnel.

On 22 April, in consultations of the whole, on the basis of a special report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/226), the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the latest situation concerning the relocation of UNMEE personnel.

On 30 April, in a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/12), the Council noted that Eritrea's obstruction towards UNMEE had reached a level such as to undermine the basis of the Mission's mandate and had compelled it to temporarily relocate. The Council recalled its condemnation of Eritrea's lack of

cooperation. The Council expressed its readiness to assist the parties to overcome the current stalemate, and announced that a decision on the terms of a future United Nations engagement in Ethiopia and Eritrea, and on the future of the Mission, would be taken in the light of consultations with the parties.

After informal discussions with both countries, the Council, in a letter of its President of 10 June 2008, and the Secretary-General, through further consultations, formally presented to them various options for a future United Nations engagement.

On 28 July, in a letter addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2008/496), the Secretary-General informed the Council that the parties had rejected the options put before them.

On 30 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1827 (2008), by which it terminated the mandate of UNMEE, effective on 31 July 2008, and emphasized that this termination was without prejudice to the obligations of Ethiopia and Eritrea under the Algiers Agreements. The Council, inter alia, demanded that Ethiopia and Eritrea comply fully with their obligations under those agreements, show maximum restraint and refrain from any threat or use of force against each other, and avoid provocative military activities. The Council supported the ongoing efforts by the Secretary-General and the international community to engage with Ethiopia and Eritrea to help them to implement the Algiers Agreements, to normalize their relations, to promote stability, and to lay the foundation for a comprehensive and lasting peace between them. Members of the Council also requested the Secretary-General to further explore with Ethiopia and Eritrea the possibility of a United Nations presence in Ethiopia and Eritrea in the context of the maintenance of international peace and security.

Great Lakes region, including Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas

On 21 November 2007, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/44), in which it commended the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda for signing the Nairobi communiqué on 9 November 2007, recalled that the continued presence of illegal armed groups, in particular FDLR, ex-FAR/Interahamwe and the dissident militia of Laurent Nkunda, was one of the root causes of conflict in the eastern Democratic

Republic of the Congo and constituted a threat to regional stability. Members of the Council encouraged the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda to implement fully their commitments in the Nairobi communiqué, and reiterated their full support to MONUC.

On 13 March 2008, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1804 (2008), by which it demanded that FDLR, ex-FAR/Interahamwe, and other Rwandan armed groups operating in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo immediately lay down their arms and present themselves without any further delay or precondition to the Congolese authorities and MONUC for disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration, and that they stop recruiting and using children, release all children associated with them and halt gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, stressing that those responsible must be brought to justice. The Council also called on the Governments of the two countries to intensify their cooperation to implement their commitments under the Nairobi communiqué with a view to creating conditions conducive to the repatriation of demobilized combatants.

With respect to Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)-affected areas, on 6 December, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/720), the President of the Council informed him that the members of the Council had taken note of the proposal contained in his letter dated 21 November 2007 (S/2007/719) that the mandate of the temporary Liaison Office of the Special Envoy for the LRA-affected areas be extended and that the Office be upgraded to a special political mission for the Special Envoy for the LRA-affected areas for a duration of one year, until 31 December 2008.

On 20 June, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed by the Special Envoy for the LRA-affected areas, Joaquin Chissano, on the latest developments with regard to LRA and the Juba peace talks. Council members expressed their concern over reports that LRA was rearming, and called upon LRA leaders to sign and implement the final peace agreement. After some discussion, the Council decided not to issue a proposed presidential statement.

Rwanda

On 10 July 2008, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1823 (2008), by which it terminated the prohibitions imposed by paragraphs 9 and 10 of resolution 1011 (1995) and dissolved the Committee established pursuant to resolution 918 (1994) concerning Rwanda. The Council also stressed the need for countries in the region to ensure that arms and related materiel delivered to them are not diverted to or used by illegal armed groups.

Guinea-Bissau

On 3 October 2007, during informal consultations, the Council heard a briefing by the Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, Shola Omoregie, on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in that country (UNOGBIS). While generally welcoming the initial progress made over the past few months, especially in the areas of public administration reform and cooperation with international financial institutions, members of the Council emphasized that Guinea-Bissau continued to face enormous challenges such as the critical lack of energy and infrastructure, high levels of social, political and military tension due to the upcoming elections, and the alarming threat of drug trafficking and organized crime. The Council members also highlighted the role of the United Nations and the international community, particularly in terms of economic and financial support and capacity-building.

On 19 October, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/38), in which it recognized the importance of containing and reversing the threat of drug and human trafficking to the peace consolidation process in Guinea-Bissau. The Council welcomed the scheduled convening of legislative elections in 2008 and called on all segments of Bissau-Guinean society to ensure that elections were held in a peaceful and orderly fashion. The Council also took note of a letter from the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau, requesting that Guinea-Bissau be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, and expressed its intention to consider the request as a matter of priority.

On 3 December, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/703), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council supported his intention to extend the mandate of UNOGBIS until 31 December 2008.

On 11 December, in a letter addressed to the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2007/744), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council supported the request of the Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau to have his country included in the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, and invited the Commission to provide initial advice on the situation in Guinea-Bissau within 90 days.

On 12 December, during informal consultations, the Council received briefings by the Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, and by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Antonio Maria Costa. Following the meeting, in a statement of the President to the press, members of the Council expressed anew their concern at the security threat posed by drug trafficking and organized crime and noted with appreciation the progress made by the Government, with the support of the international community and the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, towards developing a robust anti-narcotics trafficking programme. They stressed the importance of attaining a successful outcome of the Lisbon Conference on 19 December 2007 and the regional conference led by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to be organized in 2008. They also welcomed progress made by the Government in pursuing national reconciliation, restoring the credibility of the country externally and promoting cooperation with international financial authorities. Members of the Council further encouraged all national stakeholders to support the organization of free and fair legislative elections in 2008 and expressed their hope that an agreement might soon be reached on the date of those elections.

On 26 March 2008, at an open meeting, the Council heard a briefing by the Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and the Chairperson of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Luiza Ribeiro Viotti of Brazil. The representative of Guinea-Bissau also made a statement. In the consultations of the whole that followed, members of the Council reaffirmed their support for the continuing efforts made by the Government of Guinea-Bissau, working in close cooperation with its partners, to consolidate peace in the country, commended the efforts of the

Peacebuilding Commission's Guinea-Bissau configuration to develop a strategic peacebuilding framework, and looked forward to further advice from the Peacebuilding Commission as requested. In a statement delivered to the press thereafter, members of the Council noted with satisfaction the announcement by the President of Guinea-Bissau, João Bernardo Vieira, that legislative elections would be held on 16 November 2008, and called on the Government to accelerate the preparations for those elections. They further appealed to the international community to provide the financial and material resources necessary to ensure the effective and timely organization of the polls.

On 25 June, at an open meeting, the Council heard a briefing by the Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the Chairperson of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. The representative of Guinea-Bissau also made a statement. After the consultations that followed, the President, on behalf of the Council, delivered a statement to the press welcoming the progress made in the preparations for the legislative elections scheduled for 16 November 2008, calling upon the Government of Guinea-Bissau and all parties to ensure an environment conducive to free and fair elections and urging the international community to continue to provide technical, material and financial resources, in order to fill the current gaps and ensure effective and timely elections. Members of the Council reiterated their concern over the acute threat posed by drug trafficking and organized crime, underlined the importance of security sector reform to the peace-consolidation process in Guinea-Bissau, and called on the international community to further enhance support for national and regional efforts in this regard. Members of the Council reaffirmed their support for the action undertaken by the African Union, ECOWAS, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries in the peacebuilding process in Guinea-Bissau. Members of the Council stood ready to consider, as appropriate, the recommendations of the Secretary-General, in particular to strengthen the capacity of UNOGBIS and the United Nations country team to provide the required support to the peacebuilding process in an integrated and efficient manner.

Liberia

On 6 September 2007, following a closed meeting with the countries contributing troops to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia, Alan Doss, who presented the drawdown plan and recommendations of force levels of UNMIL as set out in the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Liberia (S/2007/479).

On 20 September, the Council adopted, as a presidential text, resolution 1777 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of UNMIL until 30 September 2008 and reduced the number of personnel to be deployed from October 2007 to September 2008, as recommended by the Secretary-General.

On 19 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1792 (2007), by which it renewed the arms embargo and travel ban for a further period of 12 months and extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 20 June 2008.

On 14 April 2008, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ellen Margrethe Løj, presented to the Council the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/183) covering major developments in Liberia, including progress made in meeting the benchmarks for the drawdown phase of the UNMIL consolidation, drawdown and withdrawal plan. While taking note of the progress achieved in the areas of peace consolidation and socio-economic reconstruction, members of the Council acknowledged that Liberia continued to face significant challenges such as fragile security, pervasive poverty, food insecurity, high unemployment, massive illiteracy, poor infrastructure and inadequate delivery of basic services. Members of the Council supported the efforts of the Government of Liberia to ensure economic recovery, fight corruption, implement the interim poverty reduction strategy, restore basic social services, reform the legal and judicial system, counter drug trafficking and organized crime, as well as promote disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. They also called upon the United Nations agencies, the African Union, ECOWAS and the international community to continue to help Liberia to consolidate peace and rebuild the nation.

On 16 June, in consultations of the whole, the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to

resolution 1521 (2003) presented a briefing on the report of the Panel of Experts on Liberia (S/2008/371).

On 18 June, the Council adopted, as a presidential text, resolution 1819 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of the Panel of Experts until 20 December 2008.

Sierra Leone

On 27 August 2007, during consultations of the whole, the then Director of the Africa Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Dmitry Titov, reported to the Council on the first presidential and parliamentary elections organized by the Sierra Leone authorities following the withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) in December 2005. Members of the Council welcomed the announcement, on 25 August 2007, of certified results for the parliamentary and presidential elections in Sierra Leone, congratulated the Sierra Leone authorities on the security measures taken and urged the parties concerned to maintain the same constructive spirit, discipline and patience as the electoral process entered its final and decisive phase. The Council also welcomed the international support for the electoral process, including the contribution of election observers.

On 19 September, the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the situation in Sierra Leone after the second round of the presidential elections. Members of the Council agreed on a statement to the press noting the results of those elections and encouraging the international community to continue to support Sierra Leone on its path to peace and security, including through achieving agreement between the new Government and the Peacebuilding Commission on an integrated peacebuilding strategy.

On 14 December, at a public meeting, the Chairperson of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Frank Majoor of the Netherlands, informed the Council that the Commission had adopted the Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework on 12 December 2007. He stressed the importance of that development and advocated continued support by the Security Council for the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, particularly in view of the implementation of the Framework. In the informal

consultations that followed, members of the Council heard a briefing by the Executive Representative for the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), Victor da Silva Angelo, on the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/704). Members of the Council underlined the progress achieved thus far, expressed satisfaction at the presidential and parliamentary elections, and called for continuing international assistance to help Sierra Leone to overcome present challenges. Members of the Council further emphasized, in that connection, the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission.

On 21 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1793 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of UNIOSIL until 30 September 2008 and requested the Secretary-General to submit by 31 January 2008, and for the Council's consideration, a completion strategy for UNIOSIL.

On 28 February 2008, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2008/137), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council welcomed the action taken by UNIOSIL to provide details of the proposed 20 per cent reduction in the number of staff by 31 March 2008 and would welcome further information in the report of April 2008 on the planned drawdown of UNIOSIL between the local election scheduled for 5 July 2008 and the termination of the mandate of the Office in September 2008, along with specific proposals on the mandate, structure and strength of the successor integrated political office.

On 7 May, during the informal consultations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Rule of Law and Security Institutions presented the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/281) on developments in the situation in Sierra Leone, including further information on the completion strategy of UNIOSIL and the proposed establishment of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone in October 2008 for an initial period of one year. Members of the Council also heard a briefing by the Chairperson of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission on the implementation of the Peacebuilding Cooperation Framework for Sierra Leone. Members of the Council reaffirmed their support for continued assistance and contributions of the United Nations agencies, regional organizations and the international community to durable peace and the sustainable development of Sierra Leone.

Somalia

During the period under review, the situation in Somalia remained insecure, with a high number of injuries and fatalities and increasing incidents of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia, despite efforts by the Transitional Federal Government and the international community to advance the political process.

On 13 August 2007, in consultations of the whole, the Council considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2007/381), presented by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, François Lonseny Fall. Members of the Council encouraged political dialogue, stressing that it should include all social strata. They also emphasized the need to support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). They expressed concern at the continuing piracy along the Somali coast and its effects on the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and at the low percentage of women members of the National Reconciliation Congress. The Council also recognized the need to take steps to improve the humanitarian situation and called upon all parties to respect international law and human rights.

On 20 August, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1772 (2007), by which, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, it renewed its authorization of AMISOM for a further six months to provide protection to the transitional federal institutions and help them to carry out their functions of government and security for key infrastructure, and to contribute to the creation of security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance. Members of the Council also requested the Secretary-General to continue to develop the existing contingency planning for the possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation replacing AMISOM.

On 11 September, Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo of South Africa, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), briefed the Council on the work of the Monitoring Group and the sanctions Committee, during which he particularly stressed that Somalia was, as reported by the Monitoring Group, awash in arms.

On 3 October, in consultations of the whole, after hearing a briefing from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia, Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, on the situation in the country, the Council

expressed concern at the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in Somalia and renewed its calls for progress in the political process as well as logistical, financial and technical support in order to facilitate the full deployment of AMISOM and the withdrawal of foreign forces from Somalia. Members of the Council also called upon all the relevant Somali parties to engage in political dialogue and called on the Transitional Federal Government to reach out to all factions and clans to ensure an all-inclusive political and reconciliation process. Members of the Council also considered the possibility of relocating the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) from Nairobi to Mogadishu, under the protection of a multinational force.

On 24 October, during consultations of the whole, the Council received a briefing from Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo of South Africa, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), on the work of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 13 of resolution 1772 (2007), in which the Council had requested the Committee to report on possible measures that might be taken to strengthen the effectiveness of the arms embargo and how they might be implemented.

On 19 November, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Haile Menkerios, on recent developments in Somalia. While expressing their deep concern at the deteriorating political, security and humanitarian situation in the country, members of the Council called on all Somali stakeholders to renounce violence and engage in an inclusive peace process and underlined the need to continue to actively develop contingency plans for the possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force as part of an enhanced United Nations integrated strategy in Somalia. They also emphasized the need for enhanced international assistance to address the worsening humanitarian situation.

On 17 December, the Council held a debate on Somalia, during which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General briefed the members on how to address the situation in the country. The Special Representative made proposals relating to the political and security fields and called on the international community to commit itself to a clear course of action. Members of the Council welcomed the briefing and expressed their full support for the efforts of the

Special Representative. They also reiterated their strong concern at the situation in Somalia and the massive human suffering resulting from it.

On 19 December, following consultations of the whole, the Council, under the presidency of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy, adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/49), in which members of the Council welcomed the appointment of the new Prime Minister, Nur Hassan Hussein, and urged all Somali parties to reject violence and enter into a substantial dialogue. They expressed their deep concern at the deteriorating humanitarian situation, aggravated by the prevailing security conditions in Somalia, and demanded that all parties in Somalia ensure unfettered access for humanitarian assistance, fulfil their responsibilities and obligations under international humanitarian law, and take necessary measures to protect civilians. The Council reiterated its strong support for AMISOM. It also reiterated its request that the Secretary-General develop the existing contingency plans for the possible deployment of a United Nations operation in Somalia and requested the Secretary-General to report by 8 February 2008 on progress made in this regard.

On 27 December, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/763), the President of the Council informed him that the members of the Council had taken note of his intention to continue the activities of UNPOS for the biennium 2008-2009.

On 15 February 2008, at a public meeting, the Council heard a briefing from the Representative of the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations, Lila H. Ratsifandrihamana, on the situation in Somalia. She provided the Council with an update on the deployment of AMISOM, outlined the recommendations of the African Union Peace and Security Council to improve the political, security and humanitarian situation in Somalia and conveyed to the Council the appeal of the African Union for urgent action to deploy a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia, which would replace AMISOM, to help to ensure long-term stabilization and the post-conflict reconstruction of Somalia. After the briefing, the representative of Somalia urged the Council to accelerate the implementation of its presidential statement of 19 December 2007 (S/PRST/2007/49), in which the Council had reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to develop the existing contingency plans for the possible deployment of a United Nations

peacekeeping operation to further enhance peace in Somalia and support the African Union Mission there. For its part, his Government stood ready fully to cooperate and work closely with the Council and the Secretary-General in that regard. In the ensuing consultations of the whole, Council members received a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the outcome of the United Nations fact-finding mission to Somalia from 7 to 25 January 2008.

On 20 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1801 (2008), by which it renewed its authorization of AMISOM for a further period of six months, until 20 August 2008. The Council authorized AMISOM to take all necessary measures, as appropriate, to carry out the mandate set out in resolution 1772 (2007), and underlined in particular that the Mission could take all necessary measures to provide security for key infrastructure and to contribute to the creation of the necessary security conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance. The Council affirmed its intention to meet promptly following the report of the Secretary-General expected on 10 March 2008, which would offer specific options and recommendations to strengthen the ability of UNPOS to support further the full deployment of AMISOM, and to prepare for the possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force to succeed AMISOM.

On 20 March, at a formal meeting, the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia. In ensuing consultations of the whole, members of the Council received a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. The Council had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Somalia (S/2008/178), which provided an update on the security, political, human rights and humanitarian situations, and outlined the development activities carried out by United Nations agencies and programmes. It also presented a road map for contingency planning for the possible deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation to take over from AMISOM, as requested by the Council in its resolution 1772 (2007) and the presidential statement of 19 December 2007 (S/PRST/2007/49). In his report, the Secretary-General generally endorsed the three-track strategic approach, as defined in the strategic

assessment annexed to the report, as the basis for the United Nations engagement in Somalia.

On 29 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1811 (2008), by which, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, it extended the mandate of the Monitoring Group for a further six months. It condemned flows of weapons and ammunition supplies to and through Somalia as a serious threat to peace and stability in Somalia. The Council also asked the Monitoring Group on Somalia to continue to investigate, in coordination with relevant international agencies, all activities, including in the financial, maritime and other sectors, which generated revenues used to commit arms embargo violations, and to make recommendations based on its investigations. In addition, the Council requested the Monitoring Group to work closely with the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) on specific recommendations for additional measures to improve overall compliance with the arms embargo, and to submit through the Committee a final report no later than 15 days prior to the termination of its mandate.

On 15 May, the Council held consultations of the whole, during which members expressed their strong support for the Secretary-General's integrated strategy for peace and stability in Somalia, including plans for a greater international presence on the ground. The meeting was followed by the unanimous adoption of resolution 1814 (2008), in which, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, members of the Council approved the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a joint planning unit in the office of his Special Representative, welcomed his recommendation to relocate UNPOS and the country team headquarters from Nairobi to Mogadishu, recalled its intention to take measures against those who seek to prevent or block a peaceful political process, stated its intention to take measures against those who breach the arms embargo, and requested the Secretary-General to establish an effective capacity within UNPOS to monitor and enhance the protection of human rights in Somalia. The Council also expressed its willingness to consider a peacekeeping operation to take over from AMISOM, at an appropriate time, subject to progress in the political process and improvement in the security situation on the ground.

In the face of the increasing number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery in the waters off the coast of Somalia and at the request of the Transitional

Federal Government for urgent assistance, on 2 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1816 (2008), by which it condemned acts of piracy and armed robbery against vessels off the coast of Somalia and decided that States may enter the territorial waters of Somalia for the purpose of repressing acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea and use all necessary means for that purpose, provided that advance notification had been given by the Transitional Federal Government to the Secretary-General. The Council also stressed that that authorization applied only with respect to the situation in Somalia and had been provided only with the consent of the Transitional Federal Government.

On 8 July, the Council issued a statement to the press condemning the assassination of the head of the United Nations Development Programme in Somalia, Ali Osman Ahmed.

On 23 July, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Somalia briefed the Council on the situation there, on the basis of the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/466). The Special Representative informed the Council that the new agreement between the Transitional Federal Government and the Alliance for the Reliberation of Somalia was initialled on 9 June and witnessed by a number of observer States and international organizations, including France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, as well as the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the European Union. He warned, however, that the agreement would not bring peace overnight, and urged the Council to consider re-hatting AMISOM or deploying an international stabilization force, as suggested in the Secretary-General's latest report on developments in the country, or establishing a separate United Nations peacekeeping force. Appealing for the Council's urgent assistance in consolidating national reconciliation efforts, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Somalia, Ali Ahmed Jama Jengeli, suggested that AMISOM should be the nucleus of any future United Nations stabilization or peacekeeping force. Speaking before the Council, the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Ramtane Lamamra, affirmed that AMISOM stood ready for ultimate inclusion in an international stabilization force requested in the Djibouti Agreement, and informed the Council that AMISOM was facing a severe lack of funding and

logistical support. He also indicated that a strong naval component would allow the proposed United Nations force to extend its focus beyond Mogadishu.

Sudan

In the period under review, the Sudan featured prominently on the Council's agenda and drew considerable international attention. The Council, seriously concerned about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Darfur, on 28 September 2007 unanimously adopted resolution 1779 (2007), by which it extended until 15 October 2008 the mandate of the Panel of Experts appointed to monitor the arms embargo and other requirements imposed by resolution 1591 (2005).

On 2 October, on the basis of a briefing one day earlier on the attack against African Union peacekeepers in Haskanita, Southern Darfur, Sudan, on 29 September 2007, reportedly committed by a rebel group, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/35) in which it condemned that attack and demanded that its perpetrators be brought to justice, reiterated its support for the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS) and recalled its demand on all parties for an immediate cessation of hostilities and attacks on peacekeepers, civilians and humanitarian agencies.

On 24 October, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/41) expressing its strong concern about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in Darfur, calling on all parties to participate fully in the Sirte peace talks, underlining its willingness to take action against any party that sought to undermine the peace process, and calling on all parties to expedite preparations for the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

On 27 November, the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the progress made in the peacekeeping track in Darfur. Members of the Council agreed on the need for faster progress on the political, humanitarian and security fronts for the successful deployment of UNAMID. The worsening humanitarian situation and the lack of cohesion among rebel groups also aroused concerns on the part of many Council members. Some members of the Council criticized the Sudan for the

delay in arrangements for the deployment, while others held that such criticism was counterproductive.

On 5 December, the Council considered the report by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, on the implementation of resolution 1593 (2005). The Prosecutor alleged that the Sudan had not complied with resolution 1593 (2005) and was not cooperating with the Court. Some members of the Council criticized the lack of cooperation with the Court by the Government of the Sudan, while others emphasized the responsibility of all parties to the armed conflict in Darfur.

On 9 January 2008, the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the transfer of authority from AMIS to UNAMID, during which he noted many deployment challenges faced by UNAMID and gave details about the attack by elements of the Sudanese Armed Forces on its convoy on 7 January. In the consultations of the whole that followed, members of the Council welcomed the transfer of authority from AMIS to UNAMID and called for further contributions and assistance to UNAMID for its successful deployment.

On 11 January, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/1) in which it condemned in the strongest possible terms the attack on 7 January on a UNAMID supply convoy, welcomed the transfer of authority from AMIS to UNAMID, urged the Government of the Sudan and all armed groups to respect an immediate and complete ceasefire, and demanded that all parties cooperate fully with the deployment of UNAMID.

On 8 February, in a briefing during a debate held by the Council, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Darfur, Jan Eliasson, outlined recent developments in the political process in Darfur, noting that only two of the five main rebel groups were willing to join a negotiation process. In his briefing, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations took note of the progress made towards the signing of the status-of-forces agreement regarding the deployment of UNAMID, but underlined serious concerns about the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation, as well as the challenges UNAMID continued to face, especially in its relations with the Government of the Sudan, in particular concerning the issue of the force composition, and in terms of severe resource constraints. The Council also

heard a briefing by the Permanent Observer of the African Union. Members of the Council called on the international community to extend necessary resources to facilitate the early and full deployment of UNAMID.

On 19 February, the Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Sudan, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, during which he noted that the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, although behind schedule, remained on track. In the consultations of the whole that followed, members of the Council took note of the positive developments in the implementation of the Agreement, emphasized the indivisibility of peace in the Sudan, maintained that the foundation for peace in the Sudan remained fragile, and called on the parties concerned to further cooperate in the process of implementation of the Agreement.

On 11 March, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council on Darfur and the deployment of UNAMID. A statement to the press was then issued by the Council, in which it expressed deep concern about the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur, reiterated the need for the speediest possible deployment of UNAMID, urged all parties concerned to cooperate with the United Nations and the African Union to that end, and stressed the importance of promoting the peace process in Darfur.

On 22 April, the Council was briefed by the African Union-United Nations Joint Special Representative for Darfur, Rodolphe Adada, and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes, on the Darfur situation and the deployment of UNAMID. In the consultations of the whole that followed, members of the Council expressed their concern about the difficulties in the deployment of UNAMID, as well as about ongoing tensions in Chad-Sudan relations, despite the signing of the Dakar Agreement on 13 March 2008.

On 24 April, the Council held a closed meeting with the countries contributing troops to the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS). In the consultations of the whole that followed, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the role of UNMIS in the process. He stated that, despite certain

difficulties, the North-South peace process and the implementation of the Agreement were on track, and he made reference to encouraging progress such as the conduct of the fifth national census in April 2008. He also highlighted areas of the Agreement in which further progress was needed.

On 30 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1812 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of UNMIS until 30 April 2009, recognized that a successful implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was essential to resolving the crisis in Darfur, urged the Government of National Unity to complete the conduct of an inclusive, national census and to prepare the holding of elections throughout the Sudan, and urged UNMIS to consult with the parties and to deploy, as appropriate, personnel to the Abyei region, including areas of Kordofan.

On 13 May, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/15), by which it strongly condemned the attacks of 10 May 2008 perpetrated by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) against the Government of the Sudan in Omdurman, urged all parties to cease violence immediately and respect their obligations under international humanitarian law, and reiterated the urgent need for all parties to engage fully and constructively in the political process.

On 14 May, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the situation in Darfur and the deployment of UNAMID, during which he expressed serious concern about the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation and the ongoing stalemate in the political process in Darfur. In consultations of the whole, some members of the Council expressed their disappointment with the delayed deployment of UNAMID and impunity in Darfur, for which they held the Government of the Sudan accountable. All members emphasized the responsibility of the rebel movements which refused to join the peace and political process in Darfur, and maintained that the Council must put more pressure on those groups. Following the consultations, the President of the Council informed the press of the main items agreed upon by members of the Council during the consultations, namely the Council's condemnation of the attacks by JEM on 10 May, its deep concern about tensions in Chad-Sudan relations, and its call for international assistance for the full deployment of UNAMID and support for the Secretary-General's

efforts aimed at the appointment of a Joint Chief Mediator.

On 5 June, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court briefed the Council on the activities of the Court in Darfur pursuant to resolution 1593 (2005). The Prosecutor concluded that the Government of the Sudan was not complying with its obligations under that resolution. Members of the Council then exchanged views on the information brought to the attention of the Council by the Prosecutor, reiterating their commitment to promoting the peace process in the Sudan, an integral component of which was the fight against impunity, in particular with respect to serious international crimes. The view was expressed that striking a right balance between peace and justice should be among the priorities for further political process in Darfur.

On 16 June, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/21), in which it noted the efforts made by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to bring to justice the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur, and urged the Government of the Sudan and all other parties to the conflict in Darfur to cooperate fully with the Court, as required by resolution 1593 (2005), in order to put an end to impunity for the crimes committed in Darfur, while stressing the principle of complementarity of the International Criminal Court.

On 9 July, the Council issued a statement to the press on the attack of 8 July 2008 against UNAMID staff in Darfur, in which members of the Council condemned the attack in the strongest possible terms, called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice, and expressed deep condolences to the families of the victims and solidarity to UNAMID staff.

On 16 July, the Council held a closed meeting with the countries contributing troops to UNAMID. In the consultations of the whole that followed, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the situation in Darfur and the deployment of UNAMID. In particular, the Under-Secretary-General provided details about the attack on 8 July against a UNAMID convoy, which had resulted in seven deaths and the wounding of 22 personnel. After the consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/27), by which it reiterated its condemnation of the attack of 8 July on African Union-United Nations peacekeepers

in Darfur, welcomed the United Nations investigation and the Government of the Sudan's statement that it would assist the United Nations in this process, underlined its determination to take action against the perpetrators of the attack, and called on all parties to agree to a cessation of hostilities, to engage in the political process and to cooperate fully with the deployment of UNAMID and respect its security and freedom of movement.

On 31 July, after intensive consultations, the Council adopted resolution 1828 (2008), by which it renewed the mandate of UNAMID for another 12-month period, until 31 July 2009. The result of the Council's vote was 14 in favour (Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Indonesia, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom, Viet Nam) and 1 abstention (United States). The Council also took note of a communiqué issued by the African Union on 21 July 2008 and the concerns raised by members of the African Union Peace and Security Council regarding potential developments subsequent to the application by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court of 14 July 2008 against the President of the Sudan; and took note of their intention to consider these matters further. The Council welcomed the agreement of the Government of the Sudan to the UNAMID deployment plan, commended the contribution made by troop- and police-contributing countries, expressed support for the political process, and called on all parties concerned to end violence, engage in the peace process and fully cooperate in the deployment of UNAMID. After the adoption, 13 Council members spoke in explanation of their vote.

During the reporting period, the Council heard four briefings, on 10 September and 7 December 2007, 13 March and 12 June 2008 by Ambassador Marcello Spatafora of Italy, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) on the sanctions regime and the work of the Panel of Experts. At his briefing on 12 June, the Chairman emphasized that the measures set out in resolution 1591 (2005), including the United Nations arms embargo, continued to be violated and that the Sudan had also failed to fully implement resolution 1672 (2006). Some Council members emphasized the responsibility of the Government of the Sudan and urged the latter to fully cooperate in the implementation of relevant Security Council

resolutions, while others maintained that the rebel movements, especially JEM, were also to blame for obstructing the peace process in Darfur.

Western Sahara

Recognizing that a sustainable and comprehensive resolution of the Western Sahara issue would be achieved only on the basis of peaceful talks and agreement between the parties and States in the region, during the reporting period the Council continued to follow closely and to support the rounds of talks under the auspices of the Secretary-General.

On 26 October 2007, during consultations of the whole, Council members considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2007/619). Members of the Council expressed satisfaction with the two rounds of meetings held by the parties in Manhasset, New York, in June and August 2007, and urged the parties to resume direct negotiations as soon as possible and to engage in more substantive discussions on the relevant issues during the next round of negotiations.

On 31 October, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1783 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 30 April 2008. The Council called on the parties to continue to show political will and to work in an atmosphere propitious for dialogue in order to engage in substantive negotiations, thus ensuring the implementation of resolution 1754 (2007) and the success of negotiations. It further called on the parties to continue negotiations under the auspices of the Secretary-General without preconditions and in good faith, taking into account the efforts made since 2006 and developments of the past months, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and noted the role and responsibilities of the parties in this respect.

On 4 February 2008, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, Peter van Walsum, briefed the Council in consultations of the whole on the situation in Western Sahara and on the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2008/45). Members of the Council took note

of the meeting of the parties in Manhasset, New York, from 7 to 9 January 2008, in which they had engaged in an extensive exchange of views with regard to the implementation of resolutions 1754 (2007) and 1783 (2007) and other thematic issues such as confidence-building measures and administration. Members of the Council further welcomed the communiqué issued by the Personal Envoy on 9 January 2008, in which the parties reiterated their commitment to show political will and to negotiate in good faith, and agreed on the need to move the process into a more intensive and substantive phase of negotiations. In a statement later read out by the President of the Council to the press, members of the Council noted with satisfaction that the parties and States of the region had agreed to meet again from 11 to 13 March 2008 in Manhasset, New York, in accordance with resolution 1783 (2007), and supported the intention of the Personal Envoy to travel to the region for in-depth consultations in preparation for the next round of talks.

On 21 April, at informal consultations, the Council heard briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Julian Harston, and the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General on the situation in Western Sahara as well as on the status and progress of the negotiations on Western Sahara, including the fourth round of talks, held from 16 to 18 March in Manhasset, New York. Besides presenting the Secretary-General's report, the Personal Envoy pronounced before the Council and circulated among its members his own personal assessment of the situation in Western Sahara. The unusual circumstances surrounding the circulation of this document, as well as its contents, caused some differences of opinion among Council members.

On 30 April, after intensive consultations and statements made before and after the voting, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1813 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of MINURSO for one year. The Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed on a regular basis of the status and progress of the negotiations under his auspices and expressed its intention to receive and discuss his report. The Council also reaffirmed its commitment to assist the parties in achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, which would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements

consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Peace and security in Africa

Thematic meetings on peace and security in Africa

On 25 September 2007, presided over by the President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy, the Council met at the summit level on the theme “Peace and security in Africa”, with the participation of the Secretary-General, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Alpha Oumar Konare, and many Heads of State and Government. The Secretary-General, emphasizing that ensuring peace and security for the people of Africa was at the very core of the United Nations agenda and noting that the United Nations was strengthening its relationships with regional organizations, stated that the hybrid operation awaiting deployment in Darfur was a groundbreaking example of that expanded cooperation. He further noted that much more investment was needed in peacekeeping, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and that international action must be galvanized in all those areas. For his part, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission recognized the crucial importance of partnership with the international community, but also cautioned against undue intervention by Africa’s partners. Most of the Council members stressed the importance of the timely deployment of the Council-authorized African Union-United Nations hybrid operation, as well as the need for progress in the political, economic and human rights areas in order to end the suffering in Darfur. Regarding Somalia, they stated that additional collective efforts must be made to help the emergence of a comprehensive strategy, inspired by the principles of ownership and partnership.

On 16 April 2008, presided over by the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, the Council held a high-level debate on peace and security in Africa with a view to strengthening the relations between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in maintaining international peace and security. The debate drew considerable attention and many Heads of State and Government, Special Envoys and Ministers participated, especially from African States. The Council shared the view expressed by the Secretary-General that the relationship between the

United Nations and the African Union was strong and broad, and that the cooperation between the United Nations Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union was being increasingly deepened. The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1809 (2008), by which it stressed the utility of effective partnerships between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly the African Union, which made possible early responses to emerging crises in Africa, expressed its determination to further enhance that relationship, and encouraged the ongoing efforts of the African Union and the subregional organizations to strengthen their peacekeeping capacity and to undertake peacekeeping operations in the continent and to coordinate with the United Nations, as well as ongoing efforts to develop a continental early warning system, such as the African standby force, and enhanced mediation capacity. The adoption of resolution 1809 (2008) testified to the Council’s strong determination to elevate to a new height its cooperation and coordination with regional organizations, especially the African Union and its Peace and Security Council. In this regard, the Council welcomed the Secretary-General’s proposal to set up, within three months, an African Union-United Nations panel to consider in depth the modalities of how to support operations undertaken by regional organizations, in particular with regard to start-up funding, equipment and logistics.

On 17 April, the Council held a joint meeting with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at the ambassadorial level. This was the second such meeting of the two Councils (the first was held in Addis Ababa in June 2007). Participants discussed measures to promote cooperation and coordination between the two Councils and shared information on the conflict situations in Somalia, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire and elsewhere. The meeting welcomed the African Union Peacekeeping Support Team established by the United Nations. Following the exchange of views, a joint communiqué was issued (S/2008/263), in which the two Councils expressed their satisfaction with the ongoing efforts to develop a stronger working relationship between the two bodies, especially in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities and post-conflict reconstruction. The communiqué also indicated the intention of the two Councils to organize their next joint meeting in Addis Ababa in 2009.

Kenya

On 6 February 2008, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/4) on the post-election violence and crisis in Kenya, in which it expressed its deep concern about the killing, abuse and displacement of civilians in Kenya following the disputed elections of 27 December 2007, as well as the political, security and economic repercussions of the crisis on the wider region. The Council welcomed the announcement of progress in negotiations overseen by the former Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, between the President, Mwai Kibaki, and the opposition leader, Raila Odinga, and encouraged dialogue, compromise and reconciliation between the two sides. It urged Kenya's leaders to implement their agreement of 1 February without delay, including by taking action to dismantle armed gangs, improve the humanitarian situation and restore human rights in the country.

Djibouti and Eritrea

On 12 June 2008, during consultations of the whole, members of the Council condemned Eritrea's military action of 10 June 2008 against Djibouti, called on both parties to commit themselves to a ceasefire and urged Eritrea in particular to show maximum restraint and withdraw its forces from the area. In the evening of the same day the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/20), in which it expressed its strong concern about the serious incidents that occurred on 10 June along the frontier between Djibouti and Eritrea, which had led to several deaths and dozens of wounded in and around Ras Doumeira and Doumeira Island. The Council called on the parties, in particular Eritrea, to engage fully in the efforts to resolve the crisis, and meanwhile welcomed the efforts of the African Union, the Arab League and those States that had offered their assistance. The Council also encouraged the Secretary-General urgently to use his good offices and reach out to both parties, as appropriate and in coordination with regional efforts, to facilitate bilateral discussions on arrangements for decreasing the military presence along the border and to develop confidence-building measures to resolve the border situation.

On 24 June, the Council convened an emergency meeting, at the request of the Government of Djibouti, to discuss the situation between Djibouti and Eritrea. The Prime Minister of Djibouti, Deleita Mohamed Deleita, and representatives of the African Union and

the League of Arab States were invited to participate in the meeting and made statements. The Council was briefed by the Director of the Africa Division of the Department of Political Affairs, João Honwana, who explained that, since the United Nations did not have a presence in the area, his briefing relied on reports received from other sources. He reported that the situation had been described as calm but tense, and that military regrouping was occurring on either side of the border. In a statement to the press delivered subsequently, members of the Council urged the withdrawal of Eritrean and Djiboutian troops from a disputed area in Ras Doumeira on the Red Sea coast, and called for dialogue between the two countries in the Horn of Africa to avert further escalation of the border crisis that had flared up during the month. They also called for an immediate return to the situation that had existed before the current tension, and for respect for the presidential statement of 12 June 2008 (S/PRST/2008/20), in which both parties had been called upon to commit themselves to a ceasefire.

Zimbabwe

Over the reporting period, the Council exchanged views on the situation in Zimbabwe under the item "Peace and security in Africa".

On 23 June 2008, at a private meeting, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B. Lynn Pascoe. The representative of Zimbabwe also attended the meeting and delivered a statement. In a presidential statement adopted the same day, (S/PRST/2008/23), the Council condemned the campaign of violence against the political opposition in Zimbabwe and the actions of the Government that had denied its political opponents the right to campaign freely, regretted the absence of conditions for holding a free and fair election on 27 June, and noted that the results of the elections of 29 March must be respected. The Council also called on the Government of Zimbabwe to stop the violence, cease political intimidation, end restrictions on the right of assembly, and release the detained political leaders. The Council further condemned the Government's suspension of humanitarian operations, and called on it to immediately allow humanitarian organizations to resume their services.

On 8 July, the Council heard a briefing during which the Deputy Secretary-General, Asha Rose Migiros, informed Council members about the

political situation in Zimbabwe and the discussion of it at the African Union Summit in Sharm el-Sheikh. The Deputy Secretary-General said that in the declaration adopted at the Summit the African Union called for continued mediation efforts by the Southern African Development Community, and that the creation of a government of national unity as a way forward enjoyed broad support in the region. The Council then proceeded to informal consultations, during which Council members had an informal exchange of views with the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs. There was agreement among Council members on the assessment that political transition was needed in Zimbabwe, while there were differences of views on how best to support this path. Council members had a discussion about the rationale of a draft resolution on Zimbabwe.

On 11 July, at a meeting held under the item "Peace and security in Africa", a draft resolution on Zimbabwe was put to the vote. The draft resolution provided for, inter alia, the imposition of an arms embargo on Zimbabwe as well as a travel ban and financial freeze against President Robert Mugabe and 13 senior officials in the Government of Zimbabwe. The result of the voting was 9 in favour (Belgium, Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Italy, Panama, United Kingdom, United States), 5 against (China, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Russian Federation, South Africa, Viet Nam) and 1 abstention (Indonesia). Owing to the negative votes of permanent members of the Council, the draft resolution was not adopted.

On 29 July, during consultations of the whole, the Council received a briefing on the political and humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs. Most of the Council members took note of and expressed support for the signing on 21 July 2008 of the memorandum of understanding between Zanu-PF and the Movement for Democratic Change and at the same time affirmed their support for mediation efforts by the African Union, the Southern African Development Community and the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki. However, there remained differences in the positions of Council members on the issue. Some Council members were concerned about the limited progress in peace talks between Zanu-PF and the Movement for Democratic Change while others emphasized the success of the peaceful approach to the Zimbabwe election dispute, arguing that more time and efforts were needed to

promote the process of political transition and national reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

Security Council mission to Africa

From 31 May to 10 June 2008, the Security Council conducted a mission to five African countries currently on the agenda of the Council, namely Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and the Sudan (the Somalia leg of the visit was conducted in Djibouti for security reasons). In those countries, the ambassadors of States members of the Council met and discussed relevant issues with Government representatives and concerned parties, with a view to finding a satisfactory resolution to the conflicts and promoting cooperation between the respective Governments and United Nations missions in their countries.

At a formal meeting on 18 June, the Council heard oral reports by the four ambassadors who led the missions concerning Somalia, the Sudan, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire during the Security Council mission to Africa. The briefings focused on the situation on the ground in the countries visited by the mission, as well as on recommendations made by the Council.

Americas

Haiti

The Council continued to receive regular reports from the Secretary-General and to hear briefings from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Hédi Annabi, on the work of the Mission in assisting the Government and people of Haiti in their efforts towards national stability and the development of State institutions.

On 10 October 2007, the Council held a private meeting with countries contributing troops to MINUSTAH, during which the Council was briefed by the Special Representative on the situation in Haiti and the activities of the Mission. Members of the Council had an exchange of views on a number of issues reflected in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/503), including security, law and order, border management, institutional reform and the challenges facing the country's economy. Members of the Council

also acknowledged the important role of MINUSTAH and expressed their continued support for the Mission.

On 15 October, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1780 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of MINUSTAH for 12 months, until 15 October 2008, with a reduction in the troop level to 7,060 and an increase in the police component to 2,091. Members of the Council also requested MINUSTAH to assist the Government to pursue comprehensive border management, underlined the need for coordinated international support in the effort, and requested the Mission to expand its support to the endeavour by the Government to strengthen State institutions at all levels, including key ministries and agencies, especially outside Port-au-Prince.

On 8 April 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General briefed the Council on the situation in Haiti, during which he indicated that there had been some “real and significant” political and economic gains, but that progress remained “extraordinarily fragile and subject to swift reversal”. He also emphasized that improved living standards of the general population, positive economic growth over several years, and a significant increase in employment and investment were key indicators that the Council must keep in mind as it made decisions on the future of its involvement in Haiti.

The President, on behalf of the Council, delivered a statement to the press welcoming the progress in stabilizing Haiti, expressing support for continued implementation of the Haitian National Police reform plan, welcoming the progress made towards judicial reform and in establishing the rule of law, with the assistance of MINUSTAH. The Council members underlined the importance of continuing to promote respect for human rights and commended the decisions taken by the Government to organize senatorial and other indirect elections. They welcomed the long-term commitment of international donors and encouraged them to continue strengthening their levels of assistance. In this regard, they welcomed Haiti’s call for a high-level international conference in Port-au-Prince on 25 April 2008. They also reiterated their support for the Secretary-General’s intention to prepare a consolidation plan with benchmarks to measure continued progress, on the basis of consultation with the Haitian authorities.

On 14 April, another press statement was released condemning the murder of a Nigerian police officer of MINUSTAH, which was committed on 12 April 2008 in Port-au-Prince. The Council urged the Government of Haiti to take all necessary measures to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of the attack and stressed the need to maintain public order.

Middle East

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The situation in the Middle East during the year under review was a mixture of positive and negative developments. The Annapolis conference in November 2007 that brought the Palestinians and Israelis back to the negotiating table was followed by the ceasefire agreement in Gaza between Hamas and Israel under Egypt’s mediation, the humanitarian exchange between Israel and Hizbullah, the new round of indirect peace talks between the Syrian Arab Republic and Israel, and the efforts to conduct dialogue for national reconciliation among Palestinian parties. Yet continued violence, new Israeli settlement in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza continued to hinder progress in the Palestinian-Israeli talks. The Council continued to follow the situation closely, with monthly briefings by senior Secretariat staff and updates on the activities of the Quartet. The Council failed to adopt any resolutions or presidential statements on the matter.

On 29 August 2007, the Council held an open debate on the Middle East, during which 34 speakers took the floor. Most representatives expressed the hope that the diplomatic initiatives launched in recent months, particularly the in-depth dialogue between the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, and the Prime Minister of Israel, Ehud Olmert, and the international conference on the Middle East to be held in November 2007 at the initiative of the President of the United States of America, would lead to progress towards a definitive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They considered, however, that the fragile situation on the ground, if not carefully managed, could hinder the diplomatic process.

On 20 September, the Council heard a presentation by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and thereafter held consultations on

the situation in the Middle East, particularly concerning the Palestinian issue. The Under-Secretary-General indicated that Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas continued their bilateral dialogue and had agreed to set up negotiating teams to assist them in transforming their discussions into an agreed text, indicating that a new push for peace in the Middle East was being made and held genuine promise. He also noted that the situation on the ground remained of deep concern.

On 24 October, the Council heard a further briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. At the informal consultations that followed, members of the Council expressed support for the international meeting on the Middle East to be held in Annapolis in November under the auspices of the United States of America. Members of the Council further commended efforts undertaken by the Quartet and countries in the region, and urged all parties to refrain from the use of violence and help to ease the humanitarian situation in the occupied territories.

On 29 and 30 November, the Council held closed consultations on the Middle East peace process, specifically addressing the joint understanding that had been reached at the Annapolis conference. On 30 November, at a public briefing, the Council was updated by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the outcome of the Annapolis conference, at which the Prime Minister of Israel and the Palestinian President had reached an agreement to launch immediate good-faith bilateral negotiations to conclude a peace treaty, resolving all outstanding issues without exception before the end of 2008, an agreement on a joint steering committee which would meet continuously, and a commitment to implement immediately their respective obligations under the road map. The Under-Secretary-General said that the Annapolis conference had also included extensive discussions on international support for building the institutional capacity of the Palestinian Authority, setting the stage for the upcoming donors' conference in Paris.

On 21 December, the Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the situation in the Middle East, followed by consultations of the whole. The Under-Secretary-General remarked on the latest developments in the peace process, stressing that, since the Annapolis conference, bilateral negotiations between Israel and

the Palestinian Authority had commenced and that strong international engagement had been reflected in a landmark donors' conference, a Quartet meeting, and a meeting of the Quartet and members of the League of Arab States, all held in Paris on 17 December. At the same time, he stated that developments on the ground, including new settlement activity and ongoing violence, had been a cause of concern.

On 22 January 2008, the Council held a debate on the situation in Gaza following a request for an urgent meeting submitted by Saudi Arabia, in its capacity as the Chairman of the Group of Arab States (S/2008/31). The representatives of Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference), Saudi Arabia (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union) and Cuba (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), as well as the Permanent Observers of Palestine and the League of Arab States, were invited by the Council to participate in the meeting. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on the latest developments, stressing the deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel, and urged Israel to allow regular and unimpeded delivery of fuel and basic necessities to the Palestinian area. Over the following days, members of the Council held a series of thorough consultations. Although the consultations provided the opportunity for a useful exchange of views, no agreement on a draft presidential statement could be reached.

On 30 January, at a debate, the Council received an update on the humanitarian and economic situation in Gaza from the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. The representatives of Israel, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as the Permanent Observer of Palestine, also participated and delivered statements at the meeting.

On 26 February, the Council heard a briefing by the newly appointed Special Coordinator of the United Nations for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, Robert H. Serry. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator also briefed the Council on his visit to the region from 14 to 18 February and voiced concerns over the current situation.

On 28 February, the Council held consultations to continue the discussion of ongoing violence in Gaza and southern Israel.

On 1 March, the Council, in response to letters from the Permanent Representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the Permanent Observer of Palestine (S/2008/142 and S/2008/144, respectively), convened an emergency meeting. Addressing the Council, the Secretary-General expressed his deep concern about the escalation of violence in Gaza and southern Israel, which had resulted in a terrible civilian death toll, and called on both parties to stop the violence and restore order. The representatives of Palestine and Israel also made statements at the meeting. At the end of the informal consultations which followed, the President of the Council delivered a summary of the meeting to the media, in which he stated that members of the Council expressed deep concern about the loss of civilian lives in southern Israel and Gaza, condemned the escalation of violence, called upon all parties to respect their obligations under international law and underlined the need for all parties to immediately cease all acts of violence. In addition, members of the Council reaffirmed their support for the political process aimed at establishing two States — Israel and Palestine — living side by side in peace and security. During those consultations, one delegation proposed a draft resolution on the situation in the Middle East for the Council's consideration but members of the Council were unable to reach agreement.

On 6 March, the Council did not manage to take action on the draft statement to the press proposed by one delegation condemning the attack on a Jewish seminary in West Jerusalem on the same date.

On 25 March, the Council held a debate in the presence of the Secretary-General and with the participation of the representatives of Palestine, Israel, Cuba (on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement), Lebanon, Pakistan (on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference), Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union), the Sudan (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), and the Syrian Arab Republic. In his regular briefing to the Council, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs stated that recent efforts to advance the political process had again been overshadowed by violence, resulting in high numbers of civilian casualties and a lack of concrete improvements on the ground. He urged the international community and all regional parties to

strongly support efforts to end the violence in and around Gaza and to reopen border crossings.

On 23 April, the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Angela Kane, who indicated that Palestinians and Israelis were now engaged in the most intensive negotiations on the final status of their disputed area since the breakdown of the Israeli-Palestinian political process nearly eight years previously, and reiterated the Secretary-General's repeated calls for a cessation of all acts of violence and for all parties to comply with international humanitarian and human rights law.

On 28 May, in a public briefing to the Council, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process indicated that there were now various processes under way that had the potential to bring lasting change to the conflict-fraught Middle East, although important gaps and underlying sources of tension remained and further visible progress was needed.

On 27 June, the Council heard a presentation from the Director of the Asia and the Pacific Division of the Department of Political Affairs, Lisa Buitenheim, who said that efforts to advance the political process through direct negotiations, including those mediated by the Quartet and countries in the region, should be promoted to find common ground on the core issues. Reiterating the United Nations condemnation of all deliberate or indiscriminate attacks on civilians and any disproportionate or excessive use of force, she added that measures to support the Palestinian Authority and the economy in the West Bank must be intensified by donors fulfilling pledges for budgetary support, that the road map obligations needed to be acted upon, particularly an Israeli settlement freeze, and that the Gaza calm should be respected by all parties concerned. Regarding Lebanon, she reported that the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon had remained generally quiet, although significant numbers of Israeli violations continued to be recorded. Her briefing was followed by closed consultations of the Council, during which one delegation proposed a draft resolution on the Israeli settlements for the Council's consideration, which is still pending.

On 22 July, the Council convened an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, during which it received a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for

Political Affairs, who indicated a number of encouraging developments across the region and stressed the importance of achieving further visible progress in peaceful negotiations, consolidating the ceasefire and resolving the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, and improving the livelihood of Palestinians in the Occupied Territories.

Lebanon

On 3 August 2007, in a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/29), the Council condemned all acts of violence against UNIFIL, reiterated its attachment to the full implementation of all provisions of resolution 1701 (2006) and reaffirmed its strong support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders and under the sole and exclusive authority of its Government.

On 24 August, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1773 (2007), by which, at the request of the Government of Lebanon, it extended the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) until 31 August 2008. The Council also condemned all terrorist attacks against UNIFIL and reaffirmed that all parties had the obligation to respect the safety of United Nations personnel.

On 27 September, members of the Council approved a statement to the press, delivered by the President of the Council, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, Bernard Kouchner, calling for the holding of a free and fair presidential election in conformity with Lebanese constitutional norms and schedules, and without any foreign interference, in full respect of the sovereignty of Lebanon, on the basis of national unity and in an atmosphere free of violence, fear and intimidation, in particular against the representatives of the Lebanese people and institutions.

On 11 December, following consultations of the whole, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/46), expressing its deep concern at the repeated postponements of the presidential election in Lebanon. Emphasizing that the political impasse might lead to further deterioration of the situation, the Council reiterated its call for the holding of a free and fair presidential election in conformity with Lebanese constitutional rules, without any foreign interference or influence, and with full respect for democratic institutions.

On 10 March 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Council exchanged views and heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on continuing progress on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) and areas of concern that continued to impede the establishment of a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution between the parties.

On 15 April, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/8), in response to the Secretary-General's report of 28 February 2008 (S/2008/135) on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), in which it called upon all concerned parties, in particular those in the region, to intensify their efforts in implementing resolution 1701 (2006), including by fully cooperating with the Secretary-General in this regard. The Council also stressed the importance of and the need to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on all its relevant resolutions, including its resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

On 22 May, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/17), in which members expressed their strong support for the agreement reached in Doha on 21 May under the auspices of the League of Arab States, which, they affirmed, constituted an essential step towards the resolution of the current crisis, the return to the normal functioning of Lebanese democratic institutions, and the complete restoration of Lebanon's unity and stability. The Council commended the efforts of the League of Arab States and the State of Qatar in helping Lebanese leaders to reach an agreement, and welcomed the agreement to elect a President of the Republic, to establish a national unity cabinet and to address Lebanon's electoral law, in accordance with the Arab League initiative, as well as the decision to continue the national dialogue on ways to reinforce the authority of the State over all its territory. The Council further welcomed the agreement to ban the use of weapons and violence as a means to settle disputes, irrespective of their nature and under any circumstances. Members of the Council called for the implementation of the Doha agreement in its entirety, in accordance with the Arab League initiative, and in conformity with the Taif agreement and all relevant Security Council resolutions and statements of its President on the situation in Lebanon. Finally, the Council reaffirmed its strong

support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, unity and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders and under the sole and exclusive authority of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory.

On 9 July, in consultations of the whole, the Council heard briefings by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B. Lynn Pascoe, and the Director of the Asia and Middle East Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber, on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006). In the face of developments and challenges on the ground that have had complicated impacts on the process pursuant to resolution 1701 (2006), members of the Council continued to support full implementation of that resolution, especially with regard to the respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, protection of the assets and livelihood of civilians, and the safety and security of international peacekeeping and humanitarian personnel, thus helping to achieve a permanent ceasefire and long-term solution to Middle East conflicts.

Implementation of resolution 1559 (2004)

On 5 November 2007, the Council was briefed in consultations of the whole by the Special Envoy for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), Terje Roed-Larsen, about the Secretary-General's recent report on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2007/629). In an oral statement to the press thereafter, the President of the Council indicated that members of Council stressed the need to successfully organize a free and fair presidential election in Lebanon and called upon all concerned parties to resolve all political issues on the basis of reconciliation and national dialogue.

On 8 May 2008, at an open meeting, the Special Envoy briefed the Council on the seventh semi-annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1559 (2004) (S/2008/264). In the consultations of the whole that followed, members of the Council shared their concern about the prolonged political and security crisis in Lebanon, including the intensification of violence in Beirut and some other areas since 5 May. While supporting the efforts by Lebanon to fully restore its sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence pursuant to resolution 1559 (2004), members of the Council called

on the parties to strengthen national reconciliation and inclusive political dialogue as set out in the Taif agreement and to organize the presidential election without delay. They reaffirmed the important role of the United Nations, the League of Arab States, countries in the region and the international community at large in helping Lebanon to overcome the crisis and bring the country back to normal development. They also concurred with the Secretary-General in calling on all parties to fully abide by resolutions 1559 (2004), 1680 (2006) and 1701 (2006), and supported the full implementation of those and all other relevant Security Council resolutions with a view to achieving a just, lasting and comprehensive peace throughout the Middle East region.

International Independent Investigation Commission

On 21 September 2007, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/557), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council, having carefully considered his letter dated 20 September (S/2007/556) and with reference to resolutions 1644 (2005) and 1748 (2007), invited the International Independent Investigation Commission to extend appropriate technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities in the investigation of the murder of Member of Parliament Antoine Ghanem on 19 September.

On 5 December, the Commissioner of the International Independent Investigation Commission, Serge Brammertz, presented to the Council the ninth report of the Commission.

On 14 December, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/736), the President of the Council invited the Commission to extend appropriate technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities in the investigation of the murder of General François el-Hajj.

On 31 January 2008, the President of the Council informed the Secretary-General that Council members, having carefully considered the request of the Government of Lebanon (S/2008/60), and with reference to resolutions 1644 (2005) and 1748 (2007), invited the International Independent Investigation Commission to extend appropriate technical assistance to the Lebanese authorities in the investigation of the murder of Major Wissam Eid, Adjutant Oussama

Merheb and other civilians committed on 25 January (S/2008/61).

On 8 April, in a public briefing, the new Commissioner, Daniel Bellemare, presented the Commission's tenth report. In the consultations of the whole that followed, members of the Council welcomed the progress made in the investigation, as well as the cooperation and assistance accorded by the Government of Lebanon to the Commission, and encouraged the Commission to keep up its work while paying attention to the process of transition to the Prosecutor's Office of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

On 2 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1815 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of the International Independent Investigation Commission until 31 December 2008, while expressing its readiness to terminate the mandate earlier if the Commission reported that it had completed the implementation of its mandate.

Special Tribunal for Lebanon

On 19 September 2007, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, the Legal Counsel, Nicolas Michel, on the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/525) on the implementation of resolution 1757 (2007) regarding the establishment of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

On 27 March 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs briefed the Council on the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/173) on the implementation of resolution 1757 (2007) regarding the establishment of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon.

United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

On 11 December 2007, the Council held a private meeting with the countries contributing troops to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), and heard a briefing by the Director of the Asia and Middle East Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In the informal consultations that followed, the Council considered the report of the Secretary-General on UNDOF (S/2007/698) covering the period from 7 June to 31 December 2007.

On 14 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1788 (2007), by which it renewed

the mandate of UNDOF until 30 June 2008, and requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of that period, a report on the situation and progress in the implementation of resolution 338 (1973). On behalf of the Council, the President read out a statement (S/PRST/2007/48), noting the tension in the Middle East and the need for a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem.

On 23 June 2008, the Council held a private meeting with the countries contributing troops to UNDOF and, during the informal consultations that followed, heard a briefing by the Director of the Asia and Middle East Division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Wolfgang Weisbrod-Weber, on the most recent report of the Secretary-General on related activities of UNDOF (S/2008/390).

On 27 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1821 (2008), by which it renewed the mandate of UNDOF until 31 December 2008. In conjunction with the adoption of the resolution, the President of the Council read out a statement (S/PRST/2008/25), reiterating the need for a comprehensive settlement to resolve the tension in the Middle East.

Iraq

The Council continued to receive briefings on a quarterly basis from the Secretariat and from the representative of the United States of America, on behalf of the multinational force in Iraq, on United Nations activities in Iraq and the political, security, socio-economic and humanitarian situation in Iraq.

On 10 August 2007, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1770 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) for another 12 months and charged the Mission with an expanded mandate, as circumstances permitted, to help the Government of Iraq to achieve further improvements in such key areas as strengthening governmental institutions, promoting political dialogue and national reconciliation, engaging neighbouring countries, implementing the International Compact with Iraq, assisting vulnerable groups including refugees and internally displaced persons, and strengthening the judicial and legal system.

On 19 October, the Council considered the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1770 (2007) (S/2007/608) relating to the

activities of UNAMI. In his report, the Secretary-General assessed the steps being taken to enhance the security of United Nations personnel and called for further support from Member States to enable UNAMI to carry out its expanded mandate in Iraq. In their national statements, members of the Council called upon the United Nations, the Government of Iraq, the parties concerned, countries in the region and the international community as a whole to make further contributions to sustaining peace and stability and promoting socio-economic development of Iraq.

On 18 December, the Council heard a public briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and Controller, Warren Sach, on the activities of the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board. Following the briefing, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1790 (2007), by which, at the request of the Government of Iraq, it extended the mandate of the multinational force in Iraq until 31 December 2008. The mandate was to be reviewed at the request of Iraq on no later than 15 June 2008, and the Council might terminate it earlier if requested by the Government of Iraq. The Council also extended, for the same period, the arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board.

On 21 January 2008, during informal consultations to consider the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/19), members of the Council reaffirmed the principle of respect for the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq, stressed the need to ensure full implementation of resolution 1770 (2007) and supported the enhanced cooperation between Iraq and the United Nations, countries in the region and the international community.

On 28 April, during consultations of the whole, members of the Council exchanged views on the updated report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1770 (2007) (S/2008/266), which presented a summary of key political developments during the period under review, including activities pertaining to the resolution of disputed internal boundaries, as well as regional and international events concerning Iraq. Members of the Council in general shared the Secretary-General's positive views on the initial achievements of the people of Iraq in strengthening security and stability, national

unity, socio-economic reforms and international cooperation. However, they concurred with the Secretary-General's concern about the formidable security, development and humanitarian challenges that Iraq continued to face.

On 13 June, in a debate to discuss the mandate of the multinational force in Iraq and certain arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board, members of the Council heard briefings by the representative of the United States of America, Zalmay Khalilzad, the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and Controller, and the Special Adviser on the International Compact with Iraq and Other Political Issues, Ibrahim Gambari. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Hoshyar Zebari, also provided the Council with an update on current developments in Iraq. Members of the Council stressed that political reconciliation through negotiations among key parties in Iraq is fundamental in resolving the political crisis in Iraq. Members of the Council welcomed the successful convening on 29 May of the conference in Stockholm on the International Compact with Iraq and reiterated their call upon the international community, particularly those countries within the expanded neighbours process, to support Iraq in its pursuit of peace, stability and prosperity. In a statement delivered to the press, the President of the Council stated that members of the Council expressed their appreciation for ongoing United Nations support, encouraged continued and robust United Nations assistance in support of the Iraqi people and Government, and encouraged the Government of Iraq to work with the United Nations to help UNAMI execute its mandate in accordance with resolution 1770 (2007).

Oil-for-food programme

On 8 November 2007, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/661), the President of the Council informed him that the members of the Council had taken note of his letter and note dated 25 July 2007 (S/2007/476) concerning the processing of letters of credit pertaining to the oil-for-food programme, and reaffirmed the importance of promptly finding a final solution to the remaining issues so that payments could be made to the companies concerned and the programme could close as scheduled. The members of the Council requested the Secretary-General to develop

proposals to address unresolved issues, including the possible need for the establishment of mechanisms to deal with outstanding issues, bearing in mind the non-negotiable termination date of 31 December 2007 of the programme.

On 29 February 2008, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2008/140), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council had taken note of his letter dated 7 December 2007 (S/2007/725) as well as the accompanying note, and the letter dated 23 January 2008 (S/2008/41) and its annex, concerning the processing of letters of credit pertaining to the oil-for-food programme. Members of the Council requested a further comprehensive report from the Secretary-General no later than 15 March 2008 on progress achieved in reducing the number of outstanding letters of credit and any other outstanding issues, upon receipt of which members of the Council would consider the procedures to be adopted by the United Nations Secretariat and the Government of Iraq to ensure the appropriate conclusion of the programme.

On 23 May, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2008/341), the President of the Council informed him that the members of the Council had taken note of his letter dated 9 May (S/2008/318) and the enclosure concerning the processing of letters of credit for the oil-for-food programme, and requested the Working Group to reconvene at a convenient time in June 2008, with a view to receiving an updated report from the Secretary-General as soon as possible in July 2008. The members of the Council affirmed that, in the light of the Secretary-General's report to be submitted in July 2008, they would, at that time, take the necessary decisions in order to conclude all outstanding issues and end the oil-for-food programme with no possibility of any further extensions.

On 25 July, the delegation of Costa Rica sent a letter to the President of the Council regarding the report of the Working Group to be submitted at the end of the month. In that letter, Costa Rica requested that some additional information be included in that document with a view to facilitating the closure of the programme without exposing the United Nations Organization, including the Council, to new criticism about the financial management of the oil-for-food programme.

United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission

On 21 November 2007, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/680), the President of the Council informed him that the members of the Council had taken note of his report of 27 September pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 1762 (2007) (S/2007/568), and approved of the overall archiving procedure as set out in the report. The members of the Council also recommended that the Secretariat expeditiously and economically transfer to the Government of Iraq all the property of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) that was not proliferation sensitive or subject to export control restrictions. In addition to welcoming the continuing efforts of the Secretary-General and Secretariat staff to appropriately dispose of UNMOVIC archives and other property as soon as possible, members of the Council requested monthly updates on closing down UNMOVIC in a manner consistent with resolution 1762 (2007). The members also requested a briefing on what steps the Secretariat was planning to provide for the enhanced physical security of the archives, in particular those containing sensitive proliferation information.

On 27 June 2008, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2008/423), the President of the Council informed him that the members of the Council had taken note of his report of 9 June (S/2008/372) detailing the closing of UNMOVIC. Members of the Council supported the actions and recommendations contained in the report regarding the disposition and safeguarding of the records and archives, strictly controlling access to archives provided by Member States in confidence or with proliferation potential, and the disposition of non-expendable and other property.

Iraq and Kuwait

On 11 December 2007, the Assistant-Secretary-General for Political Affairs presented, in consultations of the whole, the twenty-fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 14 of resolution 1284 (1999) on Iraqi compliance with obligations regarding the repatriation or return of all Kuwaiti and third-country nationals or their remains and the return of the Kuwaiti national archives (S/2007/712). Following the consultations, the President of the Council issued a statement to the press.

On 18 December, following the death of Yuli Vorontsov, the Secretary-General's High-level Coordinator on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and the repatriation of Kuwaiti property, the President of the Council issued a statement to the press, expressing the sadness of members of the Council at this news, their gratitude for the outstanding contributions of Ambassador Vorontsov to the work of the United Nations, and their condolences to his family.

In a letter dated 26 March 2008 (S/2008/206), in response to the Secretary-General's letter of 11 March (S/2008/205), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council had decided to earmark US\$ 225,000 from the operating reserves and fund balance of the 2.2 per cent part of the escrow account intended for administration and operational costs to finance the continuation of the activities of the High-level Coordinator for a period of 12 months from the date of the appointment of the new High-level Coordinator. The Council also requested a comprehensive report, 12 months after the appointment, to include an update on progress during that period, as well as an assessment of the progress that might be achieved, including the conditions that would be necessary and a timescale for completion of the mandate.

On 25 June, the Council received a briefing from the High-level Coordinator, Gennady Tarasov, on the twenty-sixth report of the Secretary-General in accordance with paragraph 14 of resolution 1284 (1999) (S/2008/405). In a statement delivered by the President to the press after the briefing, members of the Council looked forward to a comprehensive report by the Secretary-General, 12 months after Ambassador Tarasov's appointment, on any further progress, as well as an assessment of the progress that might be achieved, including the conditions that would be necessary and a timescale for the completion of the High-level Coordinator's mandate. The Council members welcomed the Government of Iraq's formal invitation to Ambassador Tarasov to visit Iraq to pursue the dialogue on the outstanding issue.

Asia

Afghanistan

On 19 September 2007, the Council, by 14 votes (Belgium, China, Congo, France, Ghana, Indonesia,

Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Slovakia, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States), with 1 abstention (Russian Federation), adopted resolution 1776 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) until 13 October 2008. Strongly condemning the violence that continued to destabilize Afghanistan, the Council called on Member States to further contribute to strengthening ISAF and improving the Afghan security forces in order to provide long-term solutions to the security situation in the country.

On 15 October, the Council held a debate on the situation in Afghanistan. In his briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Tom Koenigs, emphasized that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) would continue to play its central coordinating role, stressed the need for closer coordination between ISAF, UNAMA and the Government of Afghanistan, and supported a multilateral approach with greater cooperation from neighbouring countries in face of the threats of instability and violence in Afghanistan. Members of the Council and other participants in the debate echoed the concern expressed by the Special Representative, in particular regarding the increasing number of violent and terrorist acts carried out by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremist groups, and called for sustained international engagement in Afghanistan while highlighting the country's endeavours to overcome its own problems.

On 12 March 2008, following the issuance of the Secretary-General's latest report on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2008/159), the Council held an open debate on the situation in Afghanistan during which the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations indicated that Afghanistan was facing, in addition to a massive spread of illegal narcotics, an insurgency that had proved to be more resilient and more ruthless than anyone had imagined. He called for greater focus on the coordination of the main stakeholders and the Government of Afghanistan to confront the threats. Members of the Council shared the view that UNAMA should focus more on priorities to fulfil its heavy duties. Some called for a comprehensive solution to socio-economic problems, which they saw as the root of violence and insecurity, to strengthen peace and development in Afghanistan.

On 20 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1806 (2008), by which, stressing the importance of a comprehensive approach to the challenges facing Afghanistan, and reaffirming its support for the Government and people of Afghanistan, it extended the mandate of UNAMA for one year and instructed the Mission to lead international civilian efforts to, inter alia, promote coherent international support to the Government and further implement the Afghanistan Compact. The Council recognized the importance of continuing to address the threats posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, other extremist groups and those involved in the narcotics trade, and stressed the need for the continued engagement of the international community in Afghanistan. Members of the Council also called for additional efforts to improve the rule of law, combat corruption, tackle drug trafficking, enhance respect for human rights, and encourage economic development.

On 11 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1817 (2008), in which, expressing utmost concern at the widespread smuggling to and within Afghanistan of chemical precursors used illegally to refine heroin, it called on all Member States to strengthen the monitoring of the international trade in chemical precursors, and prevent their illicit use in Afghanistan. The Council stressed the importance of a comprehensive approach to Afghanistan's drug problem, and invited Member States, particularly Afghanistan, neighbouring countries and all countries on the trafficking routes, to fully comply with relevant provisions of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, and to continue cooperation with existing United Nations mechanisms on drug control. The Council also encouraged participants in the international conference to be held in Paris on 12 June 2008 to propose measures to help Afghanistan to address the problem of diversion of chemical precursors for illicit use in the wider framework of discussions on strengthening counter-narcotics activities in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and National Drug Control Strategy.

On 16 June, in a statement read out to the press by the President of the Council, members of the Council welcomed the renewed commitment expressed by more than 80 countries and international organizations at the Paris Conference on 12 June 2008 to advance peace, security and development in

Afghanistan. At the same time, members of the Council stressed the need to continue to address the threat to the country's security and stability posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegal armed groups, criminals and those involved in the narcotics trade.

On 9 July, the Council held a debate in the presence of high-level United Nations officials and 26 national representatives, including the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan and Pakistan, on the security and humanitarian challenges in Afghanistan, and the ways to advance the outcomes of the Paris Conference in support of the country. In his briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Kai Eide, stressed the need to deliver aid more effectively and accountably, and asserted that UNAMA would be able to play its role only if significant additional human and financial resources were provided quickly. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator briefed the Council on his recent visit to Afghanistan, saying it was clear that the country's humanitarian needs were serious and growing, and more had to be done to improve the protection of civilians. While expressing concern over the security and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, members of the Council welcomed the outcome of the Paris Conference, the launch of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Speakers concurred with the conclusion of the Secretary-General in his report that more resources were necessary to meet the strengthened mandate of UNAMA and achieve defined priorities, and supported a broad, coordinated and comprehensive approach to existing challenges in Afghanistan.

On 11 July, in a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/26), the Council welcomed the outcome of the Paris Conference held on 12 June, which raised more than \$20 billion in pledges for Afghanistan's development strategy, as well as the commitment by the Government of Afghanistan to promote security, good governance, the rule of law, human rights and socio-economic development and to pursue political and economic reform, including concrete steps to combat corruption. Recalling the strengthened role of UNAMA and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in leading and coordinating international civilian efforts in the country through an integrated approach, while reinforcing Afghan ownership, the Council called on all relevant actors to

give their full support to the Mission. It also endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendation regarding the need for much greater substantive, administrative and security resources to enable UNAMA to fulfil its mandate. The Council reaffirmed once again its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan. The Council expressed its strong concern about the security situation in Afghanistan and stressed the need to continue to address the threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegal armed groups, criminals and those involved in the narcotics trade and in the diversion of chemical precursors.

Myanmar

On 20 September 2007, in consultations of the whole, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Myanmar, Ibrahim Gambari, briefed the Council.

On 26 September, in response to the situation in Myanmar, the Council held emergency consultations, after which the President of the Council made an oral statement to the media, expressing the support of the Council for the Secretary-General's decision to send his Special Adviser to the region.

On 5 October, at a formal meeting, the Special Adviser briefed the Council on his mission to the country from 29 September to 2 October 2007. He had been requested by the Secretary-General, in the exercise of his good offices, to visit Myanmar to assess the situation on the ground following the demonstrations, deliver clear messages from the Secretary-General to the Myanmar authorities, and promote dialogue between the Government and the opposition aimed at ending the crisis and achieving national reconciliation. The Special Adviser emphasized that the Secretary-General's good offices were a process, not a one-time event, and that it was ultimately up to the Government and people of Myanmar, albeit with international support, to find a way out of the crisis. Members of the Council commended both the Secretary-General and the Special Adviser for their efforts, and expressed concerns over the violent situation. They also emphasized the importance of the early release of all political prisoners and of an all-inclusive dialogue aimed at bringing about democratic change in Myanmar.

On 11 October, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/37), in which it strongly deplored the use of violence against peaceful demonstrators, stressed the need for the Government to create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with all concerned parties, and called on the Government to address the political, economic, humanitarian and human rights issues of concern to the people of Myanmar. The Council also welcomed the commitment of the Government to work with the United Nations and the appointment of an officer to liaise with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and stressed the importance of such commitments being followed by action.

On 13 November, the Council held a debate on Myanmar, during which it was briefed by the Special Adviser on his recent visit to the country and the region. Delegations of countries concerned, including Japan, Myanmar and Singapore, also participated in the debate. Following the debate, the Council held consultations of the whole which ended with the agreement of the members on elements regarding the situation in Myanmar to be orally presented to the press by the President of the Council.

On 14 November, members of the Council agreed on a formal statement to the press containing the same elements as those of the oral statement made by the President on the previous day. In the statement, members of the Council welcomed the mission of the Special Adviser, and reaffirmed their support for the continued efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser. They reaffirmed the expectations of the Security Council as set out in its presidential statement of 11 October 2007. They looked forward to the earliest possible return of the Special Adviser to Myanmar, and encouraged the Government of Myanmar to fulfil its commitment to cooperating fully with the United Nations. They also confirmed their intention to keep developments in Myanmar under close review.

On 17 January 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser briefed the Council. Following the consultations, the President delivered a statement to the press, in which he indicated that members of the Council reiterated their full support for the efforts of the Special Adviser and regretted the slow rate of progress so far. They underlined the importance of making further progress towards meeting the objectives set out in the Council's

presidential statement of 11 October 2007, noting that an early visit to Myanmar by the Special Adviser could help to facilitate this.

On 18 March, the Council held a public meeting, followed by consultations of the whole, to receive a briefing from the Special Adviser on his visit to Myanmar from 6 to 10 March. The Special Adviser indicated that, despite the lack of immediate tangible results, his visit should be assessed within the broader context of the efforts of the past two years. The Permanent Representative of Myanmar made a statement at the meeting.

Following the announcement of a referendum in Myanmar on a draft constitution in May 2008 and elections in 2010, the Council adopted, on 2 May, a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/13), in which it reaffirmed the expectations expressed in its presidential statement of 11 October and statement to the press of 15 November, noted the commitment of the Government of Myanmar to ensure that the referendum would be free and fair, underlined the need to establish the conditions conducive to an inclusive and credible process, including the full participation of all political actors and respect for fundamental political freedoms, affirmed the commitment of the Council to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Myanmar and reiterated that the future of Myanmar lay in the hands of all of its people.

On 24 July, in consultations of the whole, the Special Adviser briefed the Council on preparations and priorities for his upcoming visit to the country. The Council members then expressed their support for the mission of the Special Adviser and exchanged views on the ways to find a comprehensive solution to the situation in Myanmar.

Nepal

During the reporting period, the Council, by means of regular reports from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and others, followed closely the situation in Nepal as the country moved to its historic day of elections for a Constituent Assembly.

On 9 October 2007, in consultations of the whole, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council on recent developments in Nepal culminating in the decision of the interim Government to postpone the Constituent Assembly elections, which

had been scheduled for 22 November. It was noted that in the current circumstances elections could not realistically be held before the middle of 2008. The Council members expressed disappointment over the postponement of the elections, and urged the parties to endeavour to abide by their commitments under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including the preservation of the Seven-Party Alliance. Following the consultations, the President of the Council read a statement to the press conveying the views and sentiments of the Council members and emphasizing the need to hold the elections for the Constituent Assembly as soon as possible.

On 25 October, the Council was briefed on the situation in Nepal by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), Ian Martin, who provided an in-depth assessment of the challenges facing the Nepalese people and described how UNMIN had conducted its mandate in assisting the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Council members were largely in agreement with the assessment provided by the Special Representative and favourably disposed to extend the mandate of the Mission if such a request were to be made by the Nepalese authorities.

On 18 January 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General presented the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/5), and briefed the Council on the implementation of the mandate of UNMIN, as outlined in resolution 1740 (2007). He stressed the importance of the assistance provided by the Mission to the organization of elections for the Constituent Assembly, and outlined recent developments in the peace process in Nepal. Members of the Council largely expressed their concern over the challenges to the peace process which lay ahead, called upon the parties concerned to make every effort to ensure that the elections would be held as scheduled, and supported UNMIN in assisting the Government of Nepal in the electoral process.

On 23 January, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1796 (2008), by which, following the request of the Government of Nepal (S/2007/789), it renewed the mandate of UNMIN until 23 July 2008. The Council called on all parties to maintain momentum in the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and to work together to progress to the Constituent Assembly elections,

scheduled for 10 April. Following the adoption of the resolution, the representative of Nepal expressed his confidence that in the next six months his country would be able to achieve progress in the peace process, including the holding on 10 April of the elections for the Constituent Assembly. He also assured the Council that his Government would cooperate fully with UNMIN in implementing its mandate.

On 27 March, following a briefing on the latest developments in Nepal from the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, a statement to the press was read out by the President of the Council, in which the Council members welcomed the progress towards Constituent Assembly elections in Nepal and looked forward to the polls being conducted in a free and fair manner. They also urged all Nepalese parties to uphold public security and create an atmosphere conducive to a successful election.

On 21 April, the Council heard a preliminary assessment by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs of the Constituent Assembly elections held in Nepal on 10 April. The elections were reported to have been conducted largely in a free and fair manner and in a peaceful environment. In a statement read out to the press by the Council President, the Council members congratulated the people of Nepal on the successful elections and urged all Nepalese parties to respect the electoral results and cooperate with each other for sustainable peace and development of the country.

On 18 July, following the issuance of the report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process (S/2008/454), the Council held a debate during which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General presented the Secretary-General's recommendations on the mandate of UNMIN, and outlined the latest developments in the country. Addressing the Council, the representative of Nepal pointed out that most of the Mission's mandate had been accomplished, but the country had yet to conclude its arrangements for the cantonment of Maoist armed personnel, which were being monitored by UNMIN. He added that his Government had decided to request an extension of the Mission for another six months at a smaller scale to engage in the remainder of its mandate. In their statements, most speakers welcomed the positive developments in Nepal and supported the extension of a scaled-down United Nations special

political mission in the country, focusing mainly on monitoring the management of arms and armed personnel of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and the Nepal Army. Speakers also emphasized the importance of ensuring a participative and inclusive political process in the country and indicated that measures to support peace in Nepal had to go hand in hand with an economic programme based on poverty reduction.

On 23 July, acting on a request from the Government of Nepal and the Secretary-General's recommendations, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1825 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of UNMIN for six months in order to allow UNMIN to complete the remainder of its mandate as established under resolution 1740 (2007), in line with the agreement of 25 June among the country's political parties. The Council called upon all parties to take full advantage of the expertise and readiness of the special political mission in Nepal to support the peace process and facilitate the completion of outstanding aspects of its mandate, and to work together in a spirit of consensus and compromise in order to continue the transition to a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future. The Council concurred with the Secretary-General's view that the current monitoring arrangements should not be necessary for a substantial further period, expressed its expectation that they would be concluded within the period of the mandate, and endorsed his recommendations for a phased, gradual drawdown and withdrawal of the United Nations mission.

Timor-Leste

The Security Council, through its missions to Timor-Leste and regular meetings on the situation in the country, expressed its consistent support for the stabilization and development of Timor-Leste.

On 10 September 2007, in consultations of the whole, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Atul Khare, briefed the Council on the situation in Timor-Leste and the work of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). The Special Representative underlined the progress achieved through the electoral process, but stressed that greater efforts were needed to confront the challenges ahead, notably those relating to security sector reform, justice and accountability and internally displaced persons. On the same day, the Council

adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/33), in which it welcomed the formation of a new Government in Timor-Leste, emphasized the need for all parties to resolve disputes through peaceful channels, and reaffirmed its full support for UNMIT. The Council also expressed its readiness to work with the new Government in achieving its goals and tackling critical challenges facing the country.

On 11 February 2008, in response to the violent attacks on the President of Timor-Leste, President José Ramos-Horta, and the Prime Minister, Kay Rala Xanana Gusmão, the Council held urgent consultations of the whole, after which it unanimously adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/5) condemning the attacks in the strongest terms, regarding them as an attack on the legitimate institutions of Timor-Leste. The Council called on the Government of Timor-Leste to bring to justice those responsible for that heinous act, and called upon all people in Timor-Leste to remain calm, exercise restraint and maintain stability in the country. It also urged all parties to resolve any disputes through political and peaceful means within the framework of the country's democratic institutions.

On 21 February, briefing the Council on recent events in the country, as well as on the Secretary-General's proposal to extend the mandate of UNMIT for a further period of 12 months, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations welcomed the fact that the country's leaders from all parties had come together to urge calm, and that the country had remained peaceful, in the wake of the incident of 11 February. Condemning the attacks and expressing their hope for a speedy recovery of President Ramos-Horta, members of the Council unanimously supported the continued presence of the United Nations Mission for another period of 12 months to help the Government of Timor-Leste to further strengthen peace and development in the country.

On 25 February, by resolution 1802 (2008), the Council extended the mandate of UNMIT for one year, until 26 February 2009, at the current authorized levels. Calling on the Government of Timor-Leste to bring to justice those responsible for the attacks of 11 February, the Council further called upon the Government, assisted by UNMIT, to continue working on a comprehensive review of the future role and needs of the security sector. Furthermore, the Council requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Government of Timor-Leste, to develop a medium-

term strategy with appropriate benchmarks to measure and track progress, and to submit further reports as and when he considered appropriate. At the same time, the Council called upon UNMIT to continue to cooperate and coordinate with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes as well as all relevant partners to support the Government of Timor-Leste and relevant institutions in designing poverty reduction and economic growth policies. Members of the Council welcomed the Secretary-General's intention to send an expert mission to UNMIT in the first quarter of 2008 to conduct a thorough assessment of the requirements of the national police as well as possible adjustments needed to UNMIT police skill sets.

On 23 April, in consultations of the whole, the Council heard a briefing by a United Nations police adviser, Andrew Hughes, on the mission by a United Nations expert team to Timor-Leste from 17 to 27 March to conduct an assessment of key areas of support provided by UNMIT. That assessment mission was planned while the United Nations was reviewing the mandate of UNMIT. The police adviser praised the joint effort by the police of UNMIT and the National Police of Timor-Leste in training the Timorese police, and asked for more efforts to strengthen the security sector in Timor-Leste. Members of the Council generally welcomed the results of the mission and looked forward to the full report on the visit.

On 29 May, the Council held consultations on the report of the United Nations expert mission to Timor-Leste (S/2008/329). The report described the substantive progress achieved thus far in the reconstitution of the National Police and the challenges ahead in terms of its capacity and institutional integrity. The report also stressed the role of the UNMIT police in providing support for Timor-Leste in the reform, restructuring and rebuilding of the National Police and in broader rule of law and security sector reform issues. Taking into consideration the existing situation and on the basis of consultations with national stakeholders and international partners, the expert mission made a wide range of recommendations for the parties concerned to further improve policing, rule of law and security sector reform in Timor-Leste. Members of the Council welcomed the report of the mission and shared the view that there was a need for continued international assistance to facilitate the development of the National Police for the foreseeable future. There was also wide support for Timor-Leste's

national ownership as a central element in this regard, and for a planned handover of policing responsibility to the National Police when possible.

Security Council mission to Timor-Leste

The Council sent a mission to Timor-Leste from 24 to 30 November 2007, led by Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo of South Africa, to exchange views with the Timorese authorities on the ways and means to assist the country in developing its necessary capacities. Significantly, the mission was conducted to reaffirm the commitment of the Council to assist the Timorese people in consolidating peace, democratic governance and the rule of law in the post-electoral period, to express the Council's full support for UNMIT, and to assess the progress made in the implementation of the UNMIT mandate. The mission was warmly received by the Government and people of Timor-Leste. All interlocutors expressed their gratitude for the support of the United Nations for Timor-Leste, and their desire for the United Nations to stay in the country on a long-term basis.

On 6 December, the Council held a briefing on the Security Council mission to Timor-Leste. On behalf of the Council members, Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo of South Africa gave a preliminary oral report on the mission, recalling the points that the mission had conveyed to the Timorese authorities and other interlocutors, and presenting an overall assessment of the findings. Given the challenges facing the country, he reiterated that it was crucial to strengthen the security and justice sector, and to resolve differences between the parties concerned through political dialogue, reconciliation and political engagement.

On 13 December, the Council considered the report of the Security Council mission to Timor-Leste (S/2007/711). The report described the achievements and the remaining challenges facing the country, particularly in the areas of political dialogue, security sector reform, socio-economic development, issues regarding internally displaced persons, capacity-building, governance and human rights. Given its findings, the mission supported the extension of UNMIT beyond February 2008. The mission also emphasized that the future of the country lay in the hands of the Timorese leaders and people, and that they had to take ownership of their country's development. Speakers at the meeting shared the view that the international community's continuing support was

necessary to help Timor-Leste to strengthen national institutions and embark on security sector reform and economic development.

Europe

Bosnia and Herzegovina

On 15 November 2007, the Council held a private meeting, during which members of the Council, the Acting Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nikola Špirić, the High Representative for the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Miroslav Lajčák, and the representatives of Portugal (on behalf of the European Union) and Serbia had an exchange of views.

On 21 November, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1785 (2007), by which it authorized the Member States acting through or in cooperation with the European Union to establish for a further period of 12 months the European stabilization force in order to ensure continued compliance with the Dayton Peace Agreement of 1995.

On 19 May 2008, during a public debate, the Council was briefed on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the High Representative and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Members of the Council welcomed the agreement reached by the ruling parties on police reforms and the adoption of police-reform laws by Bosnia and Herzegovina on 16 April 2008, which had led to the initialization of a Stabilization and Association Agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the European Union. Members of the Council stressed the need for the various political actors of the country to accelerate the constitutional reform process on the basis of the principles of the Dayton Peace Agreement, and urged the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to make concerted efforts to facilitate the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. It was also stated that there was a need for the international community to continue its efforts for the transition from the Office of the High Representative to the Office of a European Union Special Representative, to transfer responsibility for the fate of the country to the legally elected Bosnian authorities.

Cyprus

On 7 December 2007, the Council held a private meeting with the countries contributing troops to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). On the basis of the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/699 and Corr.1), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Michael Møller, briefed the participants on the security situation on the island. He also noted the Secretary-General's recommendation that UNFICYP be extended for a further period of six months, until 15 June 2008. During the subsequent consultations of the whole, members of the Council shared his disappointment over the lack of progress, despite past calls by the Council, on the implementation of the agreement of 8 July 2006.

On 14 December, meeting on the basis of the latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations operation in Cyprus (S/2007/699), the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1789 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of the 43-year-old United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus until 15 June 2008. The Council also noted with concern the lack of progress in "the 8 July process", and called on all parties to immediately engage constructively with the United Nations efforts, and to cease mutual recriminations.

On 15 April 2008, during consultations, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the agreement reached on 21 March 2008 by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, leading to the reopening of the Ledra Street crossing and the launch of the working groups and the technical committees that would prepare the ground for fully fledged negotiations. The Council looked forward to the results of that preparatory process within the three-month timeline agreed to by both leaders, which, it hoped, would build trust, momentum and a sense of common interest in the search for a just, lasting solution. On 17 April, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/9), in which it welcomed the agreement of 21 March between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders and commended them for the political leadership shown in tackling issues that had obstructed progress to the reunification of Cyprus.

On 9 June, during a private meeting with the countries contributing troops to UNFICYP, the Council

was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Cyprus and Head of UNFICYP, Taye-Brook Zerihoun. Members of the Council, the Special Representative and representatives of participating troop-contributing countries had an exchange of views.

On 13 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1818 (2008), by which it extended for six months the mandate of UNFICYP until 15 December 2008. The Council members welcomed the agreement of 21 March between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, and the joint statement of 23 May, which, among other things, demonstrated a renewed political willingness to support and engage fully and in good faith with the United Nations efforts, and called on the parties to use that momentum to make greater strides towards the implementation of the commitment of the leaders to a bicomunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in the relevant Security Council resolutions, and to consider further civilian and military confidence-building measures. The Council members also welcomed the Secretary-General's analysis of the developments on the ground over the prior six months. In his report on the situation (S/2008/353), the Secretary-General stated that "a window of opportunity for Cypriots to finally resolve the Cyprus problem is clearly open", and that it was "particularly heartening" that the leaders of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities had taken important steps towards resuming negotiations.

Georgia

The Council, during the reporting period, twice extended its mission in Georgia and, while acknowledging certain progress made, noted with much concern the tense situation in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict.

On 15 October 2007, on the basis of the latest report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia (S/2007/588), the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1781 (2007), by which it extended the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) until 15 April 2008. The Council stressed the important stabilizing role of UNOMIG and the peacekeeping force of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in the conflict zone. The Council strongly urged all parties to consider and address seriously each other's legitimate security concerns, to refrain from any acts of violence

or provocation, including political action or rhetoric, and to comply fully with previous agreements regarding the ceasefire and the non-use of violence. The Council also stressed the urgent need to alleviate the plight of refugees and internally displaced persons and the need for a perspective of life in security and dignity, in particular for a new generation growing up outside Abkhazia, Georgia.

On 29 January 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jean Arnault, assisted by the Chief Military Observer, Major General Niaz Muhammad Khan Khattak, presented the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/38). The Special Representative briefed members of the Council on the implementation of the mandate of UNOMIG, and provided an update on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia. Members of the Council commended the efforts of the Mission, welcomed the improvement in the security situation, and stressed the need to improve humanitarian and economic conditions to reach a final and comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

On 14 April, the Council held a private meeting with the countries contributing troops to UNOMIG, during which the Special Representative of the Secretary-General presented the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/219) and described the work progress of UNOMIG and challenges ahead. The private meeting was followed by consultations of the whole, during which members of the Council discussed the situation in Abkhazia, welcomed the meeting of the Group of Friends on 18 and 19 February, in Geneva, and stressed the need to keep under close observation the situation in the upper Kodori valley, which must be in line with the Moscow agreement on the ceasefire and separation of forces of 14 May 1994.

On 15 April, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1808 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of UNOMIG until 15 October 2008. The Council also called on both the Georgian and Abkhaz sides to finalize without delay the document on the non-use of violence, as well as the document on the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

On 23 April, the Council held a private meeting, at the request of the representative of Georgia in his letter dated 17 April 2008 to the President of the Council (S/2008/257). Members of the Council and the

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Georgia, David Bakradze, had an exchange of views.

On 30 May, the Council held a private meeting to consider the situation in Georgia at the request of the representative of Georgia in his letter of 27 May 2008 to the President of the Council (S/2008/342). The representatives of Georgia and Germany were invited to participate in the meeting. Members of the Council and the representative of Georgia had an exchange of views.

On 21 July, the Council held a private meeting to consider the situation in Georgia at the request of the representative of Georgia contained in his letter dated 10 July 2008 to the President of the Council (S/2008/453). Members of the Council had an exchange of views. The representative of Georgia was invited to express his opinion.

On 29 July, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the situation in Abkhazia, Georgia, on the basis of the Secretary-General's report (S/2008/480). He informed the Council that, after a period of relative stability, the past four months had witnessed a resurgence of tensions stemming from, inter alia, clear disagreements as to what constituted observance or violation of the ceasefire regime. He stressed the need for strict observance of the ceasefire and separation-of-forces regime in the area of responsibility of UNOMIG in order to prevent a resumption of hostilities and create a climate conducive to dialogue between the two sides. He also appealed to the Abkhaz side to observe the freedom of movement of UNOMIG and to the Georgian side to observe the freedom of movement of the CIS peacekeeping force in their respective areas of responsibility. In the discussions, members of the Council strongly condemned the bombings and roadside explosions that occurred from 29 June to 6 July on both sides of the ceasefire line, and called upon the parties concerned to exercise utmost restraint, refrain from acts of violence which might further complicate the situation, promote confidence-building measures and show their political will to settle their differences through peaceful means.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

The 12-month reporting period witnessed a further engagement of the Council with Kosovo as developments occurred on the ground. In December 2007, the Council was unable to reach agreement on a response to the issue of Kosovo's status following an unsuccessful further round of negotiations facilitated by the European Union-Russian Federation-United States of America Troika. Early in 2008, besides regular meetings, the Council held emergency meetings on the latest developments in Kosovo, in particular in the light of Kosovo's declaration of independence.

On 9 October 2007, during informal consultations, the Council considered the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) (S/2007/582) and heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission, Joachim Rucker, on the latest developments in the situation. Members of the Council commended the Mission for its efforts, and reiterated the need for broad participation in the November elections. Members of the Council also expressed their hope for a mutually accepted settlement on the future status of Kosovo.

On 19 December, at a private meeting, the Council considered the report of the European Union-Russian Federation-United States Troika on Kosovo (S/2007/723), forwarded to the Secretary-General by the Contact Group upon the completion of the Troika's mandate. The Prime Minister of Serbia, Vojislav Kostunica, addressed the Council. The President, with the consent of the Council, extended an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Fatmir Sejdiu, who also addressed the Council.

On 16 January 2008, the President of Serbia, Boris Tadić, addressed the Council at a public debate on the basis of the latest report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2007/768). He outlined before the Council the position of Serbia on the future status of Kosovo, pointing out that resolution 1244 (1999) guaranteed Serbia's sovereignty, and called on the Council to prevent the encouragement and adoption of unilateral action on the independence of Kosovo. The debate was followed by a private meeting, during which the Special Representative of the Secretary-

General briefed the Council on the situation and the implementation of standards in Kosovo. Members of the Council welcomed the efforts of the Special Representative, commended the Troika for its extensive efforts to facilitate discussions between Belgrade and Pristina on the status of Kosovo, and called upon the two sides to show flexibility and a spirit of compromise in negotiations. Hashim Thaçi, who was invited to participate in the meeting under rule 39, also took the floor.

On 14 February, at the request of Serbia, the Council convened an emergency meeting to discuss the latest developments in Kosovo. At the meeting, held in private, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Vuk Jeremić, made a statement in which he called upon members of the Council to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Serbia and honour the demands of international law, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and resolution 1244 (1999). The Council also heard a briefing on the future status process by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

On 18 February, the Council held an emergency meeting, following Kosovo's declaration of independence, at the request of the Russian Federation and Serbia in letters to the President of the Council (S/2008/103 and S/2008/104, respectively). Members of the Council were sharply divided in their approach to the action taken by Kosovo, which had been administered by the United Nations since 1999. In his address to the Council, the Secretary-General said that he had been informed by his Special Representative about the declaration of independence by the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, and that he had also received a letter from the President of Serbia, informing him of Serbia's decision to the effect that the declaration of independence represented a forceful and unilateral secession of a part of the territory of Serbia, and had no legal effect either in Serbia or in the international legal order. In the Secretary-General's view, however, those recent developments were likely to have significant operational implications for UNMIK, and therefore, pending guidance from the Council, UNMIK would continue to consider resolution 1244 (1999) as the legal framework for its mandate and would continue to implement its mandate. The President of Serbia also made a statement in which he said that the unilateral declaration of independence by the Kosovo Albanians

constituted a flagrant violation of resolution 1244 (1999), in which the Council had reaffirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia, including Kosovo.

On 11 March, at the request of the Permanent Mission of Serbia to the United Nations in a letter dated 6 March 2008 to the President of the Council (S/2008/162), an open meeting was convened to consider the “aggravation of the situation” resulting from Kosovo’s “unilateral declaration of independence” and the subsequent fallout from its recognition by a number of countries in violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Serbia.

On 21 April, at a private meeting, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the President of Serbia, Hashim Thaçi and members of the Council had an exchange of views on the latest developments in Kosovo. They condemned the recent violence in Belgrade. Some members of the Council were also strongly critical in their assessment of the joint operation of the UNMIK police and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) on 17 March in Mitrovica, which resulted in numerous casualties among Kosovo Serbs as well as UNMIK police and KFOR personnel.

On 20 June, the Council held a public meeting, at which the Secretary-General presented the Council with a proposal to reconfigure the United Nations presence in Kosovo. The President of Serbia and Fatmir Sejdiu were invited to participate in the meeting and to express their views. The Secretary-General said that the package to adjust operational aspects of the international civil presence in Kosovo and reconfigure the profile and structure of UNMIK — the result of extensive consultations with all concerned parties and Council members in recent months — was “strictly status-neutral” and “fully within the framework of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), which remains the legal framework for UNMIK until and unless the Council decides otherwise”. He emphasized that such a reconfiguration would involve six areas, namely, the police, courts, Customs, transport and infrastructure, boundaries, and Serbian patrimony. He also said he intended to appoint Lamberto Zannier of Italy to be his new Special Representative to lead the new phase. There were differing views among the Council members on the Secretary-General’s package of proposals. Some supported the package, while others expressed serious objections to the reconfiguration, emphasizing that it could be launched

only by a decision of the Council and with the consent of Belgrade and Pristina.

On 25 July, at a meeting held on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General on UNMIK (S/2008/458), the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo and Head of UNMIK, Lamberto Zannier, who drew the Council’s attention to the fact that the fundamental changes on the ground had contributed to “a profoundly new operating reality for the Mission”. He added that, under the Secretary-General’s package of proposals, the capacity of the Mission would be reduced in areas where it could no longer function effectively and enhanced in others, with particular attention to minorities and ensuring the rights of all communities. He also informed the Council that the Mission, in principle, continued to retain executive authority for police, judiciary and Customs functions throughout Kosovo, that discussions had been held between the Mission and representatives of the European Union Rule of Law Mission on future cooperation and that the two sides were close to concluding an agreement, by which the European Union Mission was expected to deploy under United Nations authority and in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999) and the mission in Kosovo of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was also expected to continue as part of the reconfigured UNMIK, in the areas of promoting democratic values and protecting the interests of all communities.

In his address to the Council, while maintaining that Serbia could not accept its own forcible partition, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia stressed that it was now critically important for the reconfiguration to proceed in the right way, with the full engagement of Serbia, and that it must be completed with Serbia’s acceptance and the Council’s explicit approval. Speaking before the Council, Skender Hyseni of Kosovo said that Pristina would continue to seek dialogue with Belgrade on a wide number of issues of mutual interest and that it wished to engage in those talks sooner rather than later.

Briefing by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

On 28 September 2007, the Council heard a briefing by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and

Cooperation of Spain and Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Miguel Moratinos Cuyaubé, on the priorities and activities of OSCE.

General issues

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

Terrorism and counter-terrorism featured high on the Council's agenda during the period of this report, which unfortunately saw the occurrence of numerous terrorist attacks. After each incident, the Council was quick to react, condemning the attacks and reaffirming its determination to combat all forms of terrorism in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter. The Council also paid due attention to the work of its counter-terrorism-related subsidiary bodies, namely the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, and its Executive Directorate, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) concerning the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

At a public meeting on 7 September 2007, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/32) condemning in the strongest terms the terrorist attack that occurred in Batna, Algeria, on 6 September 2007.

On 20 September, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/34), in which it condemned the terrorist attack in Beirut on 19 September which killed seven persons, including a Member of Parliament, Antoine Ghanem.

On 30 September, in a statement to the press, the President of the Council voiced the Council's strongest condemnation of the suicide attack against a military bus that caused numerous deaths in Kabul on 29 September.

On 5 October, the Council held a public meeting, during which it adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/36), strongly condemning the terrorist attack on 3 October in Baghdad against the Polish Ambassador to Iraq. The Council also called on the international community to support the Government of

Iraq in exercising its responsibility in providing protection for the diplomatic community in Iraq, United Nations staff and other foreign civilian personnel working in Iraq.

On 22 October, the Council adopted a presidential statement in which it condemned in the strongest terms the bomb attacks in Karachi, Pakistan, on 18 October (S/PRST/2007/39).

On 6 November, in response to the suicide attack on the same day against a visiting parliamentary delegation in Baghlan, northern Afghanistan, the President of the Council read out a statement to the press, in which the Council members condemned the terrorist attack in the strongest terms, noting that it was one of the deadliest in Afghanistan in recent years, and urged the Afghan authorities to make every effort to bring the perpetrators and organizers to justice.

On 14 November, the Council heard briefings by the Chairmen of the three subsidiary bodies on their work and cooperation during the past six months.

On 10 December, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1787 (2007), by which it extended the initial period of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate until 31 March 2008, and requested the Executive Director to recommend changes to the organizational plan of the Directorate and submit them to the Counter-Terrorism Committee for its consideration and endorsement prior to that date.

On 11 December, in a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/45), the Council strongly condemned the terrorist attacks that occurred in Algiers on the same day near the Supreme Court and the United Nations offices.

On 12 December, following consultations of the whole to consider the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/641) on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/47), in which it condemned the terrorist attack in Baadba, Lebanon, which had killed several persons, including General François el-Hajj of the Lebanese Armed Forces, and injured many others. Emphasizing the importance of Lebanese national unity and reconciliation, the Council reiterated its condemnation of all targeted assassinations of Lebanese leaders, demanded an immediate end to the use of intimidation and violence against the representatives of the Lebanese people and institutions,

and stressed the need to bring the perpetrators to justice.

On 27 December, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/50), in which it condemned in the strongest terms the suicide attack that killed the former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto. The Council also called on all Pakistanis to exercise restraint and maintain stability in the country.

On 15, 18 and 25 January 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed by the Permanent Representatives of Italy and France on terrorist attacks: one in Kabul on 14 January and two in Beirut on 15 and 25 January. The President of the Council made statements to the press, in which members of the Council strongly condemned the terrorist attacks.

On 17 February, in the wake of the suicide attack that caused numerous deaths in the province of Kandahar, Afghanistan, the President, in a statement to the press, stated that the Council members condemned it in the strongest terms and underlined the need to bring the perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of this reprehensible act of terrorism to justice, and urged all States to cooperate actively with the Afghan authorities in this regard.

At an open debate on 19 March, the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate presented the organizational plan, which had been endorsed by the Counter-Terrorism Committee and served as basis for the consideration by the Council of the extension of the mandate of the Directorate.

On 20 March, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1805 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate until 31 December 2010 and decided to conduct an interim review by 30 June 2009 and a comprehensive consideration of the work of the Directorate prior to the expiration of its mandate.

On 28 April, the President of the Council, in a statement to the press, stated that the Council members strongly condemned the terrorist attack on 27 April at an official ceremony in Kabul, which was attended by President Hamid Karzai and other dignitaries, and urged that those responsible be brought to justice. While voicing their concern at the threats posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida, illegal armed groups, criminals and

those involved in illicit narcotics production and trafficking, members of the Council reiterated that no terrorist act could reverse the path towards peace, democracy and reconstruction in Afghanistan. The Council reaffirmed the commitment to further reinforce Afghan ownership and leadership of the country's development and security.

On 6 May, at an open debate of the Council, the Chairmen of the three subsidiary bodies briefed the Council on their work in the past six months and their efforts to improve coordination among themselves and their respective expert groups. The members of the Council encouraged further improvement in the work of the three Committees.

On 30 June, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1822 (2008), by which it updated the sanctions regime against Al-Qaida, Osama bin Laden, the Taliban and other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with them, and extended the mandate of the New York-based Monitoring Team for a further period of 18 months.

On 7, 8 and 10 July, the Council issued three statements to the press, in which members of the Council strongly condemned the terrorist attacks that occurred consecutively in Islamabad on 6 July, at the Indian Embassy in Kabul on 7 July, and outside the United States Consulate General in Istanbul on 9 July, causing numerous deaths and injuries. Members of the Council reiterated their determination to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006))

On 25 April 2008, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1810 (2008), by which it extended the mandate of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) until 25 April 2011, and decided that the Committee should intensify its efforts through its work programme to promote full implementation by all States of resolution 1540 (2004).

Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea

On 8 October 2007 and 3 January, 2 April and 2 July 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution

1718 (2006), Ambassador Marcello Spatafora of Italy, presented his 90-day reports in accordance with paragraph 12 (g) of resolution 1718 (2006), which covered the work of the Committee during the periods from 11 July to 8 October 2007, 9 October 2007 to 3 January 2008, 4 January to 2 April 2008, and 3 April to 2 July 2008, respectively.

Non-proliferation (Islamic Republic of Iran)

In response to the reports of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of 23 May (S/2007/303), 30 August and 15 November 2007 and 22 February 2008 showing that the Islamic Republic of Iran had not established full and sustained suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and heavy-water-related projects, or resumed its cooperation with IAEA under the Additional Protocol, or taken the other steps required by the IAEA Board of Governors, or complied with the provisions of Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), and 1747 (2007), following consultations of the whole on 28 February 2008, the Council on 3 March adopted, by 14 votes (Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, France, Italy, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, Viet Nam), with 1 abstention (Indonesia), resolution 1803 (2008), by which it welcomed the agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and IAEA to resolve all outstanding issues concerning the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme and progress made in this regard as set out in the Director General's report of 22 February 2008, and at the same time reaffirmed, strengthened and added to the provisions of resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007), while requesting IAEA to report further on all outstanding issues concerning the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Council received such a report (S/2008/338) on 27 May 2008, in which the Director General of IAEA noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran still had not suspended its enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and heavy-water-related projects, and that, while declared nuclear material in the Islamic Republic of Iran was not diverted, clarifications were still needed in order to assess the nature of the country's nuclear programme.

During the reporting period, Ambassador Johan C. Verbeke of Belgium, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution

1737 (2006), presented three 90-day reports in accordance with paragraph 18 of that resolution: the third on 19 September 2007, the fourth on 18 December 2007, and the fifth on 17 March 2008, covering the work of the Committee during the periods from 22 June to 19 September 2007, 20 September to 18 December 2007, and 19 December 2007 to 17 March 2008 respectively. On 13 June, Ambassador Jan Grauls of Belgium, the new Chairman of the Committee, presented the sixth 90-day report, which covered the work of the Committee during the period from 18 March to 13 June 2008.

Protection of civilians in armed conflict

On 20 November 2007, the Council held its biannual debate on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, during which the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator briefed the Council on the recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/643). The Under-Secretary-General focused in particular on four of the actions presented in the report, namely, combating sexual violence; ensuring rapid and unimpeded access; more systematic and proactive action to address housing, land and property issues; and the establishment of a Security Council working group on the protection of civilians. Council members welcomed the Secretary-General's report and expressed appreciation for the efforts of the United Nations, particularly the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to address the wide-ranging problems affecting civilians in armed conflict situations. The proposal to establish a Security Council working group on the protection of civilians did not, however, obtain unanimous support.

On 27 May 2008, the Council held the first biannual debate of 2008 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs updated the Council on the progress made in ensuring the protection of civilians, but also drew the Council's attention to the fate of the hundreds of thousands who had been displaced, abused, injured or killed in conflict situations. He proposed the creation by the Council of an expert group on the protection of civilians which would serve as an informal forum that would bring together all Council members at the expert level for transparent, systematic and timely consultations on matters related to the protection of civilians. The proposal received

widely differing responses. At the end of the debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/18) reaffirming its commitment to the implementation of its previous resolutions on the protection of civilians and to addressing the impact of armed conflict on civilians. The Council also condemned all violations of international law committed against civilians in situations of armed conflict, reaffirmed the responsibility of parties to armed conflict to ensure the protection of affected civilians and re-emphasized the responsibility of States to comply with their relevant obligations to end impunity.

Children and armed conflict

On 12 February 2008, the Council held an open debate on children and armed conflict. At the end of the debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/6), in which it strongly condemned the continuing recruitment and use of children in armed conflict and other violations, reiterated its call on parties to armed conflict listed in the annexes to the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/757) to prepare and implement concrete time-bound action plans to halt the recruitment and use of children, recognized the need for a stronger focus on the reintegration and rehabilitation of children, and invited all parties concerned to enhance their exchange of information about programmes and best practices and to ensure the availability of adequate resources and funding to support national strategies or action plans.

On 17 July, the Council held an open debate on children and armed conflict, presided by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam, Pham Gia Khiem. The Secretary-General and 60 other participants addressed the Council. In his statement, the Secretary-General commended the Council for its efforts in dealing with the issue, and emphasized that poverty and underdevelopment could make children more vulnerable to exploitation and violence. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy, requested the Council to expand the scope of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, and to concentrate on fighting the impunity of persistent and grave violators of children's rights in situations of armed conflict. The Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations briefed the Council on progress that the Department of

Peacekeeping Operations had made in protecting children, and said that the Department was developing a departmental policy to better guide its work. Among other speakers, the representative of France, Chairman of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Jean-Maurice Ripert, briefed members of the Council on the annual report on the activities of the Working Group (S/2008/455). At the end of the debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/28), in which it, *inter alia*, reaffirmed the need for States parties to comply with their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto, and for armed groups distinct from the State to refrain from recruiting or using children in hostilities, urged States that had not yet done so to consider ratifying or acceding to those instruments, requested the Secretary-General to provide additional administrative support in order for the Working Group to continue to fully carry out its mandate in an effective manner, and recognized the important role of education in areas of armed conflict as a means to achieve the goal of halting and preventing recruitment and re-recruitment of children.

Women and peace and security

On 23 October 2007, the Council held an open debate on women and peace and security, at which the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations presented an update on progress in the contribution of women to the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding. The Council was also briefed by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Rachel Mayanja, on the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2007/567). At the end of the debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/40), in which it reaffirmed the importance of the equal role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and urged Member States, regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations system to enhance the role of women in decision-making with regard to all peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction and rebuilding of societies. It also called on Member States to continue to fully and effectively implement resolution 1325 (2000) through the development and strengthening of national efforts and capacity, and emphasized the importance of cooperation among Member States, United Nations entities and regional organizations to that end. Condemning all violations of international law

committed against women and girls, the Council called on all parties to armed conflict to fully respect international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls.

On 19 June, the Council held a ministerial-level debate on “Women and peace and security: sexual violence in situations of armed conflict”, presided by the Secretary of State of the United States of America, Condoleezza Rice. The President of the General Assembly, Srgjan Kerim, the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission, Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan, and Major General Patrick Cammaert, former Commander of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo were invited to participate in the meeting. The Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General briefed the Council on efforts United Nations bodies had made to address all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence in armed conflict. The Secretary-General further expressed his eagerness to deploy more women as police, military and civilian personnel, and also at the highest levels of mission leadership, and reaffirmed the United Nations zero-tolerance policy against sexual exploitation or abuse by United Nations personnel. At the end of the debate, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1820 (2008), in which it demanded the immediate and complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all acts of sexual violence against civilians, and requested the Secretary-General to take a range of concrete measures to address that issue.

Post-conflict peacebuilding and the Peacebuilding Commission

On 17 October 2007, during an open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding, the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission, Yukio Takasu, introduced the annual report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its first session (S/2007/458). The Council also heard statements by the Ambassadors of Norway and the Netherlands, Chairpersons of the Burundi and Sierra Leone configurations, respectively, as well as by the Ambassador of El Salvador, Chairperson of the Working Group on Lessons Learned. While Council members commended the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office for their dedicated efforts in the first year of operation, they also called for further improvements in the working methods of the Commission to maximize the impact on

the ground and to make the United Nations peacebuilding architecture an effective instrument of international collaboration in support of countries emerging from conflict. Members of the Council in general expressed the need for the Commission to consider adding new countries to its agenda, and stressed the need for early consideration of the request of Guinea-Bissau that it be placed on the agenda of the Commission. They also emphasized the need for strengthening the Commission’s cooperation with relevant United Nations bodies, including the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat, as well as with the international community at large.

On 3 January 2008, pursuant to its resolution 1646 (2005), the Council unanimously agreed to the selection of Belgium and South Africa to participate in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission, for a term of one year, until 31 December 2008.

On 20 May, the Council organized an open debate on post-conflict peacebuilding, chaired by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, David Miliband. In his opening statement, the Secretary-General mentioned three common and immediate priorities in the immediate aftermath of conflict, namely, establishing viable political processes to buttress peace agreements and to put in place legitimate national authorities; restoring security and the rule of law; and delivering immediate and tangible benefits to the affected population. He stressed the need for further coordination and response from all United Nations agencies, regional organizations, Member States and international financial institutions. His statement was followed by statements by, among others, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone, Zainab Hawa Bangura; the Senior Vice-President of the World Bank, Marwan Muasher; and the United Nations Special Adviser, Lakhdar Brahimi. Members of the Council also participated actively in the debate. At the end of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/16) emphasizing the importance of national ownership and the primary responsibility of national authorities emerging from conflict for peacebuilding and sustainable development, highlighting the United Nations leading role in the coordination of peacebuilding efforts in countries

emerging from conflict and the need to ensure that funding is available from the outset for recovery and peacebuilding activities to meet immediate needs and lay a solid foundation for longer-term reconstruction and development, especially support and contributions from regional and international organizations, Member States, international financial institutions and civil society. Recognizing the vast array of challenges that post-conflict countries were now facing, members of the Council encouraged efforts to address the need for civilian expertise in post-conflict peacebuilding and stressed that the critical role for such expertise is working in cooperation with national authorities to strengthen national capacities. Members of the Council invited the Secretary-General to provide advice within 12 months to the relevant United Nations organs on how best to take forward those issues within the United Nations system and, taking into consideration the views of the Peacebuilding Commission, how to coordinate peacebuilding activities and encourage the mobilization and most effective use of resources for urgent peacebuilding needs.

On 30 May, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2008/383), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council, having taken note of the letter dated 6 March from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and Francophonie of the Central African Republic, supported the request of the Central African Republic to be placed on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Council further invited the Commission to provide advice and recommendations on the situation in the Central African Republic, including the establishment and conduct of an inclusive political dialogue, action by the national authorities and support from the international community to develop an effective, accountable and sustainable national security sector system, and the restoration of the rule of law, including respect for human rights, and good governance in all regions of the country.

Maintenance of international peace and security: role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform

On 12 May 2008, at a public meeting followed by consultations of whole, the Council considered the item entitled "Maintenance of international peace and security: role of the Security Council in supporting security sector reform". In his address to the Council,

the Secretary-General defined security sector reform as a process of assessment, review and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation, led by national authorities and aimed at strengthening the effective and accountable security of a State and its people on the basis of respect for human rights and the rule of law. His statement was followed by statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovakia, Ján Kubiš; the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa, Susan van der Merwe; and the Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission, Yukio Takasu. At the close of its consideration of the item, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2008/14), in which it recognized that security sector reform was a long-term and nationally owned process that was rooted in the particular needs and conditions of the country in question, and that it was the sovereign right and primary responsibility of the country concerned to determine its national approach and priorities for security sector reform. The Council acknowledged the important role that the United Nations had played in supporting national security sector reform efforts. The Council also emphasized the need to develop a holistic coherent United Nations approach to security sector reform in close consultation with Member States, and underlined that United Nations support to security sector reform must take place within a broad framework of the rule of law and should contribute to the overall strengthening of the United Nations rule of law activities, as well as wider reconstruction and development efforts. This would require coordination with all relevant United Nations actors to ensure coherence of approach. The Council also recognized the importance of continued close cooperation and partnerships with non-United Nations actors in related areas. The Council requested the Secretary-General to continue to include, wherever appropriate, recommendations related to security sector reform in his periodic reports on United Nations operations mandated by the Security Council.

The role of regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

On 6 November 2007, the Council organized an open debate on the role of regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The debate drew considerable attention, with the participation of about 40 speakers including the Secretary-General and representatives of regional

organizations such as the African Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the observers for the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Participants recognized the growing importance of regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security. Most noticed a positive trend in the growth of the United Nations cooperation with such organizations and urged further steps to strengthen links between the secretariats and officials of the various organizations. However, some speakers pointed to a failure to adequately support peacekeeping initiatives of the African Union, such as those in the Sudan and Somalia. The Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/42), by which it emphasized the growing contribution made by regional and subregional organizations in cooperation with the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, reaffirmed its determination to further promote the development of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, and welcomed recent developments with regard to the cooperation between the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union.

Role of the Security Council in conflict prevention and resolution, particularly in Africa

On 28 August 2007, the Council organized an open debate on conflict prevention and resolution, particularly in Africa. The Council expressed support for the comprehensive and global approach recommended by the Secretary-General in his report on the prevention of armed conflict (A/60/891), which included structural prevention to address the root causes of conflict; operational prevention to ensure effective early warning mechanisms, mediation, humanitarian access and response, protection of civilians and targeted sanctions in the face of immediate crises; and systemic prevention to prevent existing conflicts from spilling over into other States. It also encouraged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to strengthen the United Nations risk assessment and conflict prevention capacities in Africa and around the world. The Council also encouraged further progress and greater coherence on such issues as security sector reform; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; transitional justice and the rule of law; electoral practices; peacebuilding; democratic

governance; development; humanitarian assistance; and return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The Secretary-General stated that resolution of African conflicts was a top priority for the United Nations. He held that greater investment in conflict prevention and the enhancement of the capacity of conflict mediation could save the United Nations considerable expense for peacekeeping operations in Darfur, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, northern Uganda, Western Sahara and elsewhere.

At the close of the meeting, the President of the Council read out a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/31), in which the Council acknowledged the importance of the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and promoting necessary preventive action in response to threats to international peace and security, recognized the important role of regional organizations in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, and welcomed the increasing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. The Council also reaffirmed its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1625 (2005) concerning conflict prevention, particularly in Africa.

Small arms

On 30 April 2008, the Council held an open debate on small arms and light weapons at which the Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Hannelore Hoppe, introduced the report of the Secretary-General on small arms (S/2008/258), which was submitted in compliance with a request made in a presidential statement (S/PRST/2007/24) for a report on a biennial basis containing analysis, observations and recommendations on the issue, as well as observations on the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The report discussed various aspects of the issue of small arms and light weapons, with an emphasis on the negative impact that illicit small arms have on security, human rights and social and economic development, in particular in areas of crisis and in post-conflict situations. The report also underlined the importance of developing practical exchanges between the Council and the General Assembly on stemming illicit flows of arms and ammunition to areas of crisis and conflict. The report

presented a total of 13 recommendations with respect to the negative effects of illicit small arms. Six of them directly addressed the Security Council, which might wish to consider them, where it deemed relevant.

International Court of Justice

On 2 November 2007, the Council, at a private meeting, heard a briefing from the President of the International Court of Justice, Judge Rosalyn Higgins, on the work of the Court in relation to the work of the Council.

International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

On 14 September 2007, the Council held two meetings pursuant to the requests made by the Secretary-General in his letters dated 31 July 2007 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2007/538 and S/2007/539). The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1774 (2007), by which it reappointed Hassan Bubacar Jallow as Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for a four-year term with effect from 15 September 2007, subject to an earlier termination by the Security Council upon completion of the work of the Tribunal. The Council also adopted resolution 1775 (2007) by 14 votes (Belgium, China, Congo, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Slovakia, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States), with 1 abstention (Russian Federation), by which it extended for a final period the appointment of Carla Del Ponte as Prosecutor of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia with effect from 15 September 2007 until 31 December 2007, notwithstanding the provisions of article 16 (4) of the Tribunal's statute. After the adoption of the two resolutions, the representatives of the Russian Federation, China, the United Kingdom and Italy made statements.

On 28 November, in response to a letter from the Secretary-General dated 12 November 2007 to the President of the Security Council (S/2007/678), the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1786 (2007), by which it appointed Serge Brammertz as Prosecutor of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia with effect from 1 January 2008 for a four-year term, subject to an earlier termination by the Council upon completion of the work of the Tribunal.

On 10 December, the Council held a meeting to hear briefings by the Presidents and the Prosecutors of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda on the annual reports of the Tribunals (S/2007/469 and S/2007/502, respectively), as well as efforts made in implementing their completion strategies.

On 20 February 2008, the Council, at the request of the Secretary-General conveyed in three letters to the President of the Council dated 31 December 2007 (S/2007/788), 22 January 2008 (S/2008/44) and 8 February 2008 (S/2008/99), held a meeting on the issue of appointing additional ad litem judges to the Chambers of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to conduct additional trials. The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1800 (2008), by which the Secretary-General was authorized to appoint, within existing resources, additional ad litem judges upon request of the President of the Tribunal, to a maximum of 16 ad litem judges at any one time, returning to a maximum of 12 by 31 December 2008.

On 14 May, in consultations of the whole, the Council heard a briefing by the Chairman of the Informal Working Group of the Council on the International Tribunals regarding its discussions on the residual issues relating to the completion of the Tribunals.

On 4 June, in a debate, the Council considered the reports of the Presidents and Prosecutors of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda on their implementation of the completion strategies. The members of the Council took note of the efforts of the two Tribunals in carrying out their completion strategies, requested the Tribunals to take all possible measures to stay within their deadlines and urged all States to cooperate fully with the Tribunals.

On 18 July, in response to a letter from the Secretary-General dated 13 June 2008 (A/62/896-S/2008/436) addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council, transmitting a letter dated 6 June 2008 from the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1824 (2008), by which it extended the terms of office of the permanent and ad litem judges of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda to enhance the effectiveness of trial proceedings and contribute

towards ensuring the implementation of the completion strategy.

Cross-border issues in West Africa

On 21 December 2007, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/754), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council concurred with his recommendation (S/2007/753) to extend the mandate of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) for a further period of three years, until 31 December 2010, and requesting him to report to the Council every six months on the fulfilment by UNOWA of its revised mandate.

On 18 July 2008, in consultations of the whole, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Said Djinnit, on recent activities of UNOWA. Members of the Council largely noted with satisfaction the initial and important progress made in ending conflicts, promoting national reconciliation and socio-economic reconstruction in the subregion, particularly in Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia. They shared the concerns about daunting challenges confronting West African countries such as pervasive poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, organized transnational crime, illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and other cross-border and cross-cutting problems. Members of the Council continued to support the important role played by the United Nations, the Peacebuilding Commission, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and UNOWA in assisting the West African countries in consolidating the peace and strengthening post-conflict peacebuilding efforts.

Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission

On 5 December 2007, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/710), the President of the Council informed him that members of the Council had taken note of his intention to continue the activities of the United Nations support team to the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission.

Documentation and other procedural questions

On 19 December 2007, the Council adopted a note by the President of the Security Council (S/2007/749) which included new measures to serve as guidelines for the work of the Council. The new

measures pertained to participation in informal consultations, the issuing of summary statements on matters of which the Council is seized and addenda thereto, and the preparation of the annual report to the General Assembly.

Mandate review

On 28 December 2007, in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/770), the President of the Council informed him that the Ad Hoc Committee on Mandate Review, as agreed by members of the Council, had reached the main goals for which it had been established and therefore could conclude its work. Any open, unresolved or newly emerging questions related to mandate review would be addressed in the Council through an appropriate mechanism.

Subsidiary bodies of the Security Council

On 17 December 2007, the Council heard briefings by the five outgoing Permanent Representatives in their capacities as Chairmen of subsidiary bodies of the Council.

The representative of the Congo, speaking in his capacity as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa, informed the Council of a seminar that the Group had made great efforts to organize to discuss a global strategy to prevent and settle conflicts in Africa.

The representative of Ghana, Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1518 (2003), said that the Committee continued monitoring its list of individuals and entities prescribed by resolution 1518 (2003) and focused its work on helping the Iraqi authorities to seek information and clarification relating to assets frozen outside Iraq.

The representative of Peru, Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2005) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, briefed the Council on the work of the Committee in the past two years. He noted that the Committee had not made substantial progress in monitoring the arms embargo, controlling the financing of illegal arms trafficking or prohibiting travel by persons on the Committee's list.

Speaking in his capacity as the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1132 (1997) concerning Sierra Leone, the representative of

Qatar observed that Sierra Leone had made great strides towards realizing political stability and security. The work of the Committee was now confined to tasks relating to the arms embargo applicable to non-State actors in Sierra Leone and a travel ban on the 30 people on the Committee's list. Speaking in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1521 (2003) concerning Liberia, he informed the Council that the Committee continued to coordinate with the Kimberley Process to ensure compliance with the terms for the lifting of the diamond-export ban under resolution 1753 (2007).

The representative of Slovakia briefed the Council on the work of the three subsidiary bodies that he had chaired, namely the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions and the Ad Hoc Committee on Mandate Review. He noted that the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) was a long-term process, which required sustained efforts and an innovative approach, as well as the broadest degree of international cooperation and interaction with other States and

entities, including the private sector. He recommended that the Working Group and the Ad Hoc Committee focus on enhancing interaction with the Member States and relevant United Nations organs to address the issues under their respective mandates.

On 3 January 2008, the President of the Council issued a note (S/2008/2) setting out the composition of the bureaux of all of the subsidiary bodies of the Council.

Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations

On 26 March 2008, pursuant to the request of some countries contributing troops to the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations held a meeting, with the participation of countries contributing troops to UNMEE and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The meeting provided a forum for an exchange of views among members of the Council, troop-contributing countries and the Department on the latest developments with regard to UNMEE.