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Introduction

Introduction

The year ending 31 July 2002 was one of the busiest in the history of the Security Council. It was sadly overshadowed by the events of 11 September 2001, to which the Council responded quickly and unanimously. As a direct consequence of 11 September the Council assumed major new responsibilities with the adoption of resolution 1373 (2001) and the establishment of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. Also following 11 September, the Council's work on Afghanistan intensified.

There was no let-up in the rest of the Council's business. The Middle East was a major priority. After failing to reach agreement on a number of draft resolutions in the early part of the period, the Council agreed on a total of four resolutions, most adopted unanimously, from March 2002 onwards. This, together with more regular briefings, allowed the Council to engage more regularly and pointedly with Middle East issues, although most of its resolutions remain to be implemented in full.

The Council maintained its busy agenda on Africa. It worked with a particular focus on the countries and regions where peacekeeping forces were present (Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia/Eritrea), but also devoted a good deal of energy to other African issues, including Angola, the Mano River Union, Burundi and Somalia. A number of presidencies gave a particular African focus to their work. The holding of elections in Sierra Leone in May 2002, with important United Nations assistance, marked a significant step in the return of that country to normal life.

The Council noted with pride and satisfaction the independence of East Timor on 20 May, a real success story for the United Nations, in which the Council had played its own full part. Important progress was also made on the Balkans, although the effects of ethnic strife and organized crime are still keenly felt. The Council and the United Nations will need to remain fully engaged there, particularly in Kosovo.

The Council made progress on Iraq, approving a reformed "oil-for-food" mechanism in May 2002 and supporting a renewed dialogue led by the Secretary-General. The peacekeeping operations in the Middle East (the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation

Mission (UNIKOM), and the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF)) continued their excellent work. After lengthy discussions on the question of Western Sahara, the Council was able to adopt resolution 1429 (2002), by which it extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 31 January 2003. By adopting that resolution, the Council invited the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy, James A. Baker III to continue their efforts to find a political solution to this long-standing dispute.

The Council was delighted with the award of the 2001 Nobel Peace Prize to the Secretary-General and the United Nations. Its President for December, Ambassador Moctar Ouane of Mali, was present at the awards ceremony in Oslo.

Asia

Afghanistan

After the fall of the Taliban in the autumn of 2001, the Security Council gave vigorous and whole-hearted support, expressed in various resolutions, to the efforts of the United Nations, particularly the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Lakhdar Brahimi, in forming a new and representative government in Afghanistan. The highlight of those efforts was the Bonn Agreement of 5 December 2001, which inter alia made provisional arrangements for the establishment on 22 December 2001 of an Interim Authority to govern Afghanistan.

To assist in providing security in Kabul and its surrounding areas, the Council on 20 December 2001 authorized the establishment of an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), led in the first few months by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and subsequently by Turkey. The Council also endorsed the restructuring of the United Nations operations in Afghanistan into the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). Through regular briefings from the United Nations Secretariat, the Council has been kept closely informed of developments and remains united in its support for the work of UNAMA to support the process established under the Bonn Agreement. The emergency Loya Jirga in June 2002 elected Hamid Karzai as President of

Afghanistan and established a Transitional Administration to govern Afghanistan until the re-establishment of permanent government institutions.

Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Afghanistan

The Security Council continued to monitor the sanctions imposed against the Taliban and their non-compliance with resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1333 (2000). Following the events of 11 September 2001 and the military action taken against the Taliban and al-Qa'idah, however, the Council decided to review its policy on Afghanistan.

This led to the removal of the financial sanctions imposed upon certain Afghan Government entities and enabled the Afghan Interim Authority to obtain much-needed financial resources. Prior to the expiration on 19 January 2002 of the sanctions against the Taliban, Osama bin Laden and al-Qa'idah network, the Council reoriented its sanctions regime directly towards al-Qa'idah organization, the remnants of the Taliban and other associated groups. Accordingly, on 18 January 2002, the Council adopted resolution 1390 (2002), expressing its determination to respond to the threat posed by al-Qa'idah and the Taliban to international peace and security. The resolution imposed an asset freeze on specified members of al-Qa'idah network and the Taliban and others associated with them, as well as a travel ban and a global arms embargo against al-Qa'idah and the Taliban. A previously established Monitoring Group was also reoriented to monitor compliance, implementation and enforcement by States Members of the United Nations.

East Timor

Until the end of its mandate on 20 May 2002, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), under the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sergio Vieira de Mello, continued to provide transitional administration for East Timor and to support the East Timorese leadership and people in their preparations for independence, including by assisting in the peaceful elections for the Constituent Assembly on 30 August 2001 and the presidential elections on 14 April 2002. Recognizing that the fledgling State would remain fragile in the early stages of independence, on 17 May 2002 the Council, by resolution 1411 (2002), established the

United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET) to help the new government in establishing East Timor as a viable, independent State. The Council agreed that UNMISSET should have a lean structure and a tightly defined mandate, and that it should downsize and devolve responsibilities to the East Timorese government over a period of two years, according to predetermined milestones. The Council marked East Timor's independence with an open debate on 20 May 2002, chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Singapore. The Council subsequently recommended to the General Assembly the admission of East Timor to membership in the United Nations.

Africa

Angola

The Security Council continued to monitor events closely in Angola. The Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Africa, Ibrahim Gambari, gave regular briefings on his efforts to bring an end to the conflict and to improve the humanitarian situation. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Kenzo Oshima, briefed the Council at intervals on the work being done by the United Nations and other donor agencies to resolve the humanitarian crisis in Angola. The Angolan Vice-Minister for External Affairs, Georges Chikoti, attended one of the open briefings and offered the views of the Government of Angola. The United Nations sanctions regime against the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) continued to be monitored by the Monitoring Mechanism chaired by Ambassador Juan Larrain. Demonstrating the importance attached by the Security Council to the implementation and enforcement of sanctions against UNITA, the Council repeatedly agreed to extend the mandate of the Monitoring Mechanism during 2001 and 2002.

With the death of Jonas Savimbi in February 2002, an opportunity for a lasting peaceful settlement to the conflict at last presented itself. During this intensive period, the Special Adviser, Ibrahim Gambari, continued to work closely with all parties in support of the implementation of the objectives set out in the Lusaka Protocol. With its resolution 1412 (2002) of 17 May, the Council showed its support for the peace process by suspending the provisions of the

travel restrictions imposed upon senior UNITA officials and their close family. The suspension covered a period of three months, after which the Council intended to determine whether to extend the suspension. The Council also agreed to review the mandate of the United Nations Office in Angola with a view to providing it with the necessary support to consolidate the peace process.

West Africa

The year has seen encouraging progress towards peace and stability in West Africa, particularly in Sierra Leone. The regional situation remains fragile, however, with continuing tensions in Guinea-Bissau, a rebellion in Liberia and poor relations between Liberia and her neighbours.

Mindful of the consolidation still required, the Security Council has maintained the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) at 17,500 troops, the largest current United Nations peacekeeping operation. Their deployment throughout the country allowed the state of emergency to be lifted and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to be completed early in 2002. The elections in May 2002, which the Council decided UNAMSIL should support, were a particularly important milestone in Sierra Leone's revival.

The sanctions imposed on Liberia in March 2001 helped to constrain the ability of the Government of Liberia to support the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The Council, however, decided in May 2002 that Liberia had not fully met its demands to cease all support for RUF, and that pressure had to be maintained on the Government of Liberia to comply with those demands in full. The Council therefore extended the sanctions for another year, with a review after six months. The Council also remained concerned by the internal fighting in Liberia, which escalated late in 2001, creating large numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The Council continued to emphasize the importance of the regional dimension in its work on West Africa, welcoming the Mano River Union summit in Rabat in February 2002, encouraging that process to continue, welcoming the Secretary-General's establishment of a new United Nations Office for West Africa and supporting the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for

greater subregional cohesion. Ambassador Aguilar Zinser (Mexico), Chairman of the Sierra Leone sanctions Committee, undertook a visit to the Mano River Union States in June/July 2002. The Council held a special workshop on the subregion on 18 July 2002, focusing on the lessons to be learned from the Sierra Leone experience.

Great Lakes region

The Security Council has maintained constant and even-handed pressure on all the parties to the Lusaka Agreement to fulfil their responsibilities under the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This approach has had some success in keeping up the momentum for peace. Progress on the core issues — foreign troop withdrawal, internal dialogue and disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration — has been slow, however, and there have been reports of ceasefire violations and human rights violations in the east of the country. The lack of trust among the parties can only be addressed by further concrete progress in the underlying root causes of the conflict. The various initiatives by the Council and others to promote direct contacts among the leaders of the Lusaka parties have had limited success so far.

In its mission to the region in May 2002, led by Ambassador Levitte of France, the Council pressed for progress in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and identified the need for agreement on a comprehensive and inclusive transitional government for the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a key element in this, together with the final withdrawal of foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The mission also demonstrated continuing Council commitment to United Nations engagement in the Great Lakes region, including through the deployment of phase III of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

In the case of Burundi, the challenge for the Council, and for the United Nations and the wider international community, has been to support the implementation of the Arusha transitional arrangements, while also trying to address the continuing conflict. The Council has repeatedly insisted on the importance and urgency of achieving a ceasefire. So far, efforts to bring the armed rebel groups to the negotiating table have not produced

results and the risk of continued violence remains high. The Council has also called on the international community to give financial and economic assistance to Burundi.

Ethiopia/Eritrea

The announcement of the Boundary Commission's decision on delimitation on 13 April 2002 represented the most important phase of the peace process to date. The Security Council demonstrated its commitment to resolving this long-drawn-out dispute by sending a mission to the region in February 2002 under Ambassador Kolby of Norway, to discuss with the parties the implementation of the Algiers Agreements on the eve of the Boundary Commission's decision, which was subsequently embraced by the parties as final and binding. The Council has emphasized the importance of an expeditious and orderly demarcation process and urged the parties to cooperate fully and promptly with the Boundary Commission in this regard.

The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) troops continued to monitor the Temporary Security Zone between the two countries and the Council extended the Mission's mandate for a further six months at the end of March 2002. The parties remain committed to the peace process and continue to observe the Temporary Security Zone. At the same time, outstanding issues continue to impede UNMEE and its staff in the discharge of its mandate.

Somalia

The Council reiterated that a comprehensive post-conflict peace-building mission for Somalia should be deployed once security conditions permit. In the meantime, the Council requested the Secretary-General to undertake preparatory activities on the ground for a comprehensive peace-building mission, to be financed under a new trust fund. The Council continued to consider other ways in which it could help to advance the peace process in this violent and war-torn country. To that end, the Council supported the active efforts of the States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to push forward the peace process in Somalia. The Ninth IGAD Summit, held in Khartoum in January 2002, resolved to hold a Somalia Reconciliation Conference in Nairobi within two months, under IGAD auspices and with President Moi as coordinator. This much-needed conference, in which

all Somali factions and entities were invited to participate without preconditions, has however been postponed until September 2002.

The Council decided that concrete measures needed to be taken to strengthen the arms embargo on Somalia. The Council adopted resolution 1407 (2002) in May and resolution 1425 (2002) in July; by the latter it gave effect to and strengthened the arms embargo and established a Panel of Experts for the purpose of generating independent information on violations and for improving the enforcement of the arms embargo. Ambassador Tafrov (Bulgaria), the Chairman of the Somalia sanctions Committee, will undertake a visit to the region in October 2002 to examine further ways and means by which the embargo established by resolution 733 (1992) can be reinforced.

Guinea-Bissau/Central African Republic

The Council continued to monitor the tense political situations in Guinea-Bissau and the Central African Republic. The Secretary-General appointed David Stephen to be his Representative for Guinea-Bissau and head of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) in February 2002, taking over from Samuel C. Nana-Sinkam. In the Central African Republic, in particular, the Council agreed that calm and stability needed to be restored and called for a harmonization of regional initiatives. The Council further agreed that, in Guinea-Bissau as in the Central African Republic, political dialogue and national reconciliation should be priorities and decided that its ad hoc working group on Africa would take a closer look at both countries.

Sudan

Sanctions against the Sudan were lifted by the Council (resolution 1372 (2001)) on 28 September 2001.

Ad hoc working group on Africa

In January 2002 the Council established an ad hoc working group on Africa under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Koonjul (Mauritius). The group has begun work on a range of issues: the improvement of relations with the Organization of African Unity/African Union and subregional organizations; the Council's use of "groups of friends" to handle country-specific issues; and the follow-up to thematic debates

on Africa. The group has also done preparatory work on African issues before they come to the Council, notably the workshop session on the Mano River Union in July. The Council also had an exchange with non-members of the Council during an interactive session on the group's work in an open debate on 22 May. On 31 July, following an oral report from the Chairman of the ad hoc working group on its activities for the last six months, the Council endorsed two sets of recommendations, on cooperation with the Organization of African Unity/African Union and on the establishment of groups of friends.

Middle East

Israel/Palestine

The Council discussed the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, with growing frequency during this period. Several open debates were held for all Member States to express their views. At the beginning of 2002 Council members agreed to start regular monthly informal briefings on the situation. The aim was to keep members up to date with developments in the region and to ensure a more regular exchange of views, including with the Secretary-General.

On 12 March the Council adopted resolution 1397 (2002), which for the first time affirmed the Council's vision of a region where two States, Israel and Palestine, existed side by side within secure and recognized borders. That resolution, as well as resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the Arab Peace Initiative, initiated by Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and adopted by the Arab Summit in March 2002, have become widely accepted as the foundation for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Implementation of these concepts, however, has remained fraught with difficulties and plagued by continuing violence on the ground.

As the violence escalated early in 2002, the Council adopted three resolutions (1402 (2002), 1403 (2002) and 1405 (2002)) and agreed on presidential statements in April and July 2002. The Council's principal demands were an immediate ceasefire, withdrawal of Israeli troops from Palestinian cities, an end to all acts of violence, cooperation with the special envoys of the United States of America, the Russian

Federation, the United Nations and the European Union ("the Quartet") and others and the implementation of the Tenet and Mitchell plans. The Council, in its resolution 1405 (2002), expressed its concern at the dire humanitarian situation of the Palestinian population, in particular in the Jenin refugee camp following operations by the Israel Defence Forces. It welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative to instigate a fact-finding exercise on what had happened in the Jenin refugee camp. The Secretary-General had to disband his fact-finding team after less than two weeks in the face of Israeli difficulties with the deployment of the team. Council members regretted this development but continued to support fully the Secretary-General's efforts in this regard.

The Council renewed the mandates of UNIFIL in southern Lebanon and UNDOF in the Golan on a six- and seven-monthly basis, respectively. The operation in southern Lebanon was marked by violations of the Blue Line from both sides. Council members recalled that the Blue Line was not an international boundary but drawn for the purpose of establishing whether Israel had withdrawn from southern Lebanon and therefore implemented its obligations under resolution 425 (1978). The Council also recalled that the Secretary-General had concluded that Israel had withdrawn in accordance with that resolution. The Council called on the parties fully to respect the Blue Line and urged them to put an end to all violations of it. The Council called on the parties to ensure that UNIFIL was accorded full freedom of movement in the discharge of its mandate throughout its area of operations, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report of 12 July 2002. The Council commended the Government of Lebanon for taking steps to ensure the return of its effective authority throughout the south, including the deployment of Lebanese armed forces, and called on it to continue those measures. Council members demanded that the parties respect the safety of UNIFIL personnel.

Iraq

In 2002 the Secretary-General's dialogue with Iraq was renewed. Members of the Security Council supported this process, as they did his demand that Iraq finally comply in full with its obligations under the Council's resolutions.

Meanwhile, the Council's attention turned to securing improvements to the sanctions regime and the

oil-for-food programme. Following the adoption of resolution 1352 (2001) on 1 June 2001, the Security Council continued its consideration of how to modify the programme on the basis of a goods review list. In particular, on 28 November 2001, by resolution 1382 (2001), the Council pledged to adopt the proposed goods review list and procedures for its application, subject to any refinements to them agreed by the Council, for implementation beginning on 30 May 2002, and reaffirmed its commitment to a comprehensive settlement on the basis of relevant resolutions, including any clarification necessary for the implementation of resolution 1284 (2001). The Council reaffirmed the obligation of all States, pursuant to resolution 661 (1990) and subsequent relevant resolutions, to prevent the sale or supply to Iraq of any commodities or products, including weapons or any other military equipment, and to prevent the making available to Iraq of any funds or any other financial or economic resources, except as authorized by existing resolutions.

After extensive discussion, the Council finally approved the new goods review list mechanism on 13 May, when it unanimously adopted resolution 1409 (2002). The adoption of the new mechanism for the processing of civilian exports to Iraq will significantly improve the flow of such goods while maintaining necessary controls on dual-use and other military-related items. The Council will review the mechanism and make any necessary adjustments by November 2002.

Iraqi oil exports under the oil-for-food programme have suffered significant financial losses, meaning that fewer humanitarian goods and supplies can be purchased under the programme.

On other Iraq-related matters, Council members were regularly briefed on the work of the Secretary-General's High-Level Coordinator for missing Kuwaiti and third country nationals, Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov. They remained united in their support for Ambassador Vorontsov and their demand that Iraq fulfil its obligations to account for and return all missing nationals and property. They followed carefully and supported the Secretary-General's talks with the Government of Iraq and noted the development with regard to the return of Kuwait's national archives.

Europe

Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

There was regular discussion of Kosovo throughout the period. The Council welcomed the signing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo-Federal Republic of Yugoslavia common document on 5 November 2001, the peaceful conduct of the Kosovo-wide elections on 17 November 2001, various steps towards the formation of the provisional institutions of self-government, and the appointment of Michael Steiner as Special Representative of the Secretary-General in succession to Hans Haekkerup. Overall, a generally low-key and practical approach by the Council was an encouraging sign of a greater degree of security and stability on the ground and of progress at the political level.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

On 10 September 2001, the Council adopted resolution 1367 (2001) lifting the arms embargo on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

In his report of November 2001, the Secretary-General informed the Council of his view that the follow-on mission to the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) should be the responsibility of regional organizations, not the United Nations. It is now generally agreed that the Mission's mandate will not be renewed beyond 31 December 2002. If this is confirmed, it will be an example of a successful exit strategy for a United Nations peacekeeping mission. On 28 February 2002, the Peace Implementation Board accepted the offer from the European Union to provide a European Union Police Mission from 1 January 2003 after the end of the mandate of the International Police Task Force. On 5 March 2002, the Council, by resolution 1396 (2002) welcomed the decision of the Peace Implementation Board to accept the European Union offer, as well as the designation of Lord Ashdown as High Representative, succeeding Wolfgang Petritsch. The mandate of UNMIBH was renewed on 12 July 2002, after delays connected with the intensive debate over the International Criminal Court, until 31 December 2002.

Prevlaka

On 15 January 2002, the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP) by a further six months against a background of differing messages from Croatia, which had requested the termination of UNMOP, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which had made known its view that UNMOP should remain in place until the parties reached a negotiated settlement. It was finally agreed on 12 July 2002, with the support of the parties, that the mandate would be renewed until 15 October 2002.

Cyprus

After a frustrating period, some progress was made in the second half of the review period towards a solution of the long-running Cyprus problem. In September 2001, Council members expressed disappointment when the Turkish side declined the Secretary-General's invitation to resume the search for a settlement. On 4 December 2001, the two leaders met face-to-face and agreed to begin direct talks in Cyprus, at the invitation of the Secretary-General in the exercise of his mission of good offices, conducted pursuant to resolution 1250 (1999). Council members were regularly briefed in the first half of 2002 by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus, Alvaro de Soto, and on each occasion expressed their full support for the negotiating process, and for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Adviser. When the self-imposed deadline of 30 June passed, they expressed concern that progress was slow, and urged both sides, and in particular the Turkish side, to intensify their efforts.

The Council also extended the mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) twice during the period, for a further period of six months on each occasion.

Abkhazia, Georgia

During this period the situation in the zone of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict has generally remained calm largely owing to the presence of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) peacekeeping force.

Some progress has been made on the fundamental issue of the future political status of Abkhazia within the State of Georgia, as a result of the sustained efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, with the assistance of the Russian Federation, in its capacity as facilitator, as well as of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General and of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. A welcome development was achieved with the finalization of the document entitled "Basic Principles for the Distribution of Competencies between Tbilisi and Sukhumi" and its letter of transmittal, with the full support of all members of the group of Friends of the Secretary-General. However, the Abkhaz side consistently refused to accept the document because it claimed that Abkhazia's status had already been determined.

A major source of concern was the presence of the Georgian troops in the upper Kodori Valley, in violation of the Moscow Ceasefire Agreement. The Georgian side was repeatedly called upon to fulfil its obligations, under relevant protocols, to withdraw its troops from the valley and create conditions for the independent verification of the withdrawal through regular patrols of UNOMIG and the CIS peacekeeping force.

General issues

Counter-terrorism

On the day following the attacks of 11 September 2001 on New York and Washington, D.C., the Security Council adopted resolution 1368 (2001) condemning the attacks. On 28 September, the Council adopted resolution 1373 (2001) and thereby set in motion an exercise of unprecedented intensity in combating a significant threat to global peace and security. The resolution imposed binding obligations on all States to prevent and suppress terrorism. It established a Committee, the Counter-Terrorism Committee, to monitor the implementation of the resolution and required all Member States to report to it.

The Counter-Terrorism Committee, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, set about its work quickly and thoroughly. It issued

guidance to States on how they should report on the steps taken to implement the resolution. It compiled a directory of contact points in Permanent Missions and capitals to facilitate cooperation on the areas covered by resolution 1373 (2001). From 27 December it began to review the reports submitted, entering into a dialogue with each Member State on raising its capacity with respect to terrorism. The Security Council broke new ground through the Committee in the degree to which it has engaged in cooperation with every Member State in the follow-up to the resolution, including help to Member States seeking technical and financial assistance.

The Committee has also taken care to develop a transparent, open approach. The Chairman briefed the wider United Nations membership on the Committee's activities several times over the reporting period. The Committee also established contacts with other entities of the United Nations system, and with other international and regional organizations active in the area of counter-terrorism.

Peacekeeping

On 14 January 2002, the Council agreed on a new mechanism to further improve cooperation between the Council and troop-contributing countries. The new mechanism consists of joint meetings between the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and relevant troop-contributing countries. It complements the format of public and private meetings provided for by resolution 1353 (2001), which represented an important step forward in the Council's relationship with those countries and which, in the view of many Council members and troop-contributing countries, has yet to develop its full potential.

Late in June/early in July 2002 the Council was obliged to suspend discussion of the renewal of the mandate of UNMIBH in the face of serious differences of view over the coming into force on 1 July of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The week of 8 July saw a series of intensive exchanges, both in informal consultations and in an open debate on 10 July. Those discussions culminated in the unanimous adoption of resolution 1422 (2002) establishing that, if a case involving certain peacekeeping contingents arose, the Council has

requested that consideration of it be deferred within a 12-month period. Peacekeeping mandates falling due in July were subsequently renewed on their merits.

In August 2001 the Council adopted resolution 1366 (2001) on conflict prevention and in March 2002 it adopted an aide-memoire on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

Sanctions

The working group on sanctions continued its work during the period in question, with Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) taking over the chairmanship in January 2002.

Working methods

The Council continued to review its working methods, with particular emphasis on increasing transparency. Many more meetings were held in public; and many monthly Presidents briefed non-members informally on the work of the Council. The Council also decided to reconfigure the format of its annual report to make it more timely and informative for members of the General Assembly.

Periodic wrap-up sessions, which at first only involved the participation of Council members, were held in June, August, November and December 2001, and subsequently included the participation of non-members in February, May and June 2002. Those sessions provided opportunities for the Council to reflect on its work and consider how to improve both procedural and substantive aspects of its work. In the spirit of promoting greater transparency the Council also issued a note by the President of the Security Council, circulating a report prepared by the Secretariat on procedural developments in the work of the Council in 2001.

Thematic issues

The Council has continued to consider thematic issues as appropriate. Thematic issues have also been integrated into the Council's normal business. The protection of civilians, and the role of women and children in armed conflict, are areas where the Council has tried to pay more attention to particular themes.