

cooperate with the international community, especially the Council, and its commitment to promoting conditions for international peace and security. He also sent special thanks to the Non-Aligned Movement caucus in the Council. He stated that many useful and constructive bilateral talks, characterized by professional diplomacy, had been undertaken between

the Sudan and the Council members, although these had delayed the adoption of the resolution for some time. He believed that, the resolution represented a strong impetus for the Sudan to proceed forward and to cooperate in wider fields, particularly anti-terrorism, in order to realize justice, peace, security and stability in the world.⁸

⁸ Ibid., p. 4

17. Letter dated 30 April 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Initial proceedings

Decision of 19 December 2001 (4440th meeting): statement by the President

By a letter dated 30 April 2001 addressed to the President of the Security Council,¹ the Secretary-General, recalling the endorsement received by the Council through a statement of its President of 21 December 2000,² to dispatch an Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa, submitted the report of the Mission, which visited 11 West African countries from 6 to 27 March 2001. In its report, the Inter-Agency Mission advocated a comprehensive approach to durable and sustainable solutions to priority needs and challenges in West Africa. Several recommendations were made, including the creation of a mechanism for systematic and regular consultations among United Nations entities and with Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other subregional organizations. To enhance the United Nations capacity and collaboration in the subregion, the report proposed the establishment of a United Nations office for West Africa, to be headed by a Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Other recommendations related to peace and security, governance and human rights, humanitarian assistance, economic development and regional integration.³

At its 4439th meeting, on 18 December 2001, the Security Council included in its agenda without

objection the item entitled "Letter dated 30 April 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council".

Statements were made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, as well as by all Council members and the representatives of Belgium (on behalf of the European Union⁴), Egypt, Guinea, Morocco, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

In opening the meeting, the President (Mali) emphasized that the public debate demonstrated the Council's commitment to seek lasting solutions to the priority needs and problems of West Africa. He also underlined that the report of the Inter-Agency Mission contained a "clear-sighted and courageous" assessment of the situation as well as practical, relevant and feasible recommendations.⁵

In his briefing, the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs recalled that the report of the Inter-Agency Mission had recommended that the United Nations and the international community consider the adoption of an integrated, global and regional approach in the effort to prevent and manage the many conflicts in the region. Outlining the main challenges facing the United Nations with regard to West Africa, he focused on the issues of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, circulation of light weapons, children and armed conflicts, peace, justice and national reconciliation, humanitarian situation and

¹ S/2001/434.

² S/PRST/2000/41.

³ On the report of the Inter-Agency Mission, see also the discussion at the 4319th meeting of the Council in connection with the situation in Sierra Leone (Sect. 15 of the present chapter).

⁴ Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey aligned themselves with the statement.

⁵ S/PV.4339, p. 2.

human rights. In light of these challenges, he emphasized the need for sustained support for ECOWAS and the Mano River Union as well as for the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa.⁶

In their reactions to the briefing, recognizing that the challenges facing West Africa had a subregional dimension, the majority of speakers endorsed the need for an integrated holistic strategy that would include the United Nations, the international community, the West African States concerned, and the regional and subregional players; supported the establishment of the Office of the Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa; advocated the need to further increase coordination with and support for ECOWAS; and supported the implementation of effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in the countries of the region. Some delegations hoped that further consideration would be given to the recommendations contained in the Inter-Agency Mission report which had not been fully implemented yet.

With regard to specific country situations, many speakers welcomed the progress achieved in the Mano River Union and emphasized the importance of confidence-building and cooperation, encouraging in this connection the States of the Mano River Union to hold a summit in the near future. Referring to the situation in Sierra Leone, although recognizing the presence of a few more challenges related to the Revolutionary United Front, many delegations noted progress, welcomed the upcoming elections and stressed the need for them to be democratic and all-

⁶ Ibid., pp. 2-8.

inclusive. In connection with Liberia, a number of delegations expressed concern over the security situation in the country and emphasized the importance of the continued engagement of the international community in the country, particularly in view of developments in Sierra Leone.

The representative of the United States drew attention to the issue of sanctions against Liberia and indicated that soon the Council would consider renewing or strengthening those sanctions since President Taylor had continued to violate the embargo on importation of arms and the ban on diamond exports. He also added that the Council should sanction those individuals most responsible for continuing threats to peace and the election process.⁷

At the 4440th meeting, on 19 December 2001, the President made a statement on behalf of the Council,⁸ by which the Council, *inter alia*:

Welcomed with satisfaction the report of the Inter-Agency Mission and fully supported initiatives taken with a view to implementing its recommendations;

Emphasized that greater subregional integration must remain a key goal for the United Nations system; stressed the need to further strengthen the capacities of ECOWAS;

Underlined the importance of taking steps to develop cooperation and coordination among the intergovernmental bodies and entities of the United Nations system which could influence the situation in West Africa;

Also emphasized the need to strengthen the capacity of ECOWAS to monitor and to stem the illicit flows of small arms and the establishment of militia;

Appealed to the international community for substantial financial assistance for the programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants and other peace consolidating activities in Sierra Leone.

⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

⁸ S/PRST/2001/38.