

and on the implementation of the Bangui Agreements and the National Reconciliation Pact, including the commitments relating to economic recovery, the restructuring of the security

forces and the functioning of the Special Force for the Defence of the Republican Institutions;

9. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

13. The situation in the Republic of the Congo

Initial proceedings

Decision of 13 August 1997 (3810th meeting): statement by the President

At its 3810th meeting, held on 13 August 1997 in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations, the Security Council included in its agenda without objection the item entitled “the situation in the Republic of the Congo”.

Following the adoption of the agenda, the President (United Kingdom), with the consent of the Council, invited the representative of the Republic of the Congo, at his request, to participate in the discussion without the right to vote.

At the same meeting the President made the following statement on behalf of the Council:¹

The Security Council is deeply concerned about the situation in the Republic of the Congo following the outbreak of factional fighting in Brazzaville on 5 June 1997. The Council is particularly concerned at the plight of civilians caught up in the fighting, which has resulted in widespread loss of life, displacement of the population and severe humanitarian conditions in Brazzaville. The Council considers that the situation in the Republic of the Congo is likely to endanger peace, stability and security in the region.

The Council expresses its full support for the efforts of the International Mediation Committee, under the chairmanship of the President of Gabon, and the National Mediation Committee, under the chairmanship of the Mayor of Brazzaville, to persuade the parties involved to reach agreement on a ceasefire and a peaceful settlement of the current crisis. It also affirms its support for the important and constructive role of the joint United Nations/Organization of African Unity special Representative for the Great Lakes region in these negotiations.

The Council expresses its grave concern at the recent recurrence of fighting in Brazzaville, calls upon the two parties to the conflict to halt all acts of violence immediately and underlines the need to respect the ceasefire agreement signed on 14 July 1997. It also calls upon the two parties to resolve the crisis on the basis of the proposals submitted by the President of Gabon currently under discussion in Libreville, including

agreement on an interim government of national unity and a timetable for the holding of presidential elections.

The Council recalls the letter dated 20 June 1997 from the Secretary-General to its President drawing attention to the request by the President of Gabon for deployment of an appropriate force to Brazzaville, and the relevant letters to the Secretary-General from the President of the Republic of the Congo and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African States. The Council endorses three conditions for the establishment of such a force set by the Secretary-General, namely, complete adherence to an agreed and viable ceasefire, agreement to the international control of the Brazzaville airport and a clear commitment to a negotiated settlement covering all political and military aspects of the crisis.

The Council is of the view that, despite some positive political developments, these conditions have not yet been fulfilled and calls upon the parties to them fulfil them without delay. The Council intends to take a decision on this matter once the Secretary-General has submitted a report to it on the question of the fulfilment of these conditions and containing recommendations on further United Nations involvement in the Republic of the Congo.

The Council also calls upon both parties to respect relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and to ensure safe and unimpeded access by international humanitarian organizations to persons in need of assistance as a result of the conflict, and in any other way to facilitate the effective implementation of humanitarian programmes.

The Council will remain seized of the matter.

Decision of 16 October 1997 (3823rd meeting): statement by the President

At the 3823rd meeting of the Security Council, held on 16 October 1997 in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations, the President (Chile), with the consent of the Council, invited the representative of the Republic of the Congo, at his request, to participate in the discussion without the right to vote.

¹ S/PRST/1997/43.

At the same meeting the President made the following statement on behalf of the Council:²

The Security Council is deeply concerned about the grave situation in the Republic of the Congo and calls for an immediate end to all hostilities. It deplores the loss of life and the deteriorating humanitarian situation and calls upon all parties to ensure the safety of the civilian population and the safe and unrestricted delivery of humanitarian assistance.

The Council calls upon all States in the region to support a peaceful resolution of the conflict and to avoid any actions which could exacerbate the situation. It condemns all external interference in the Republic of the Congo, including the

intervention of foreign forces, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, and calls for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign forces, including mercenaries.

The Council reiterates the importance of a political settlement and national reconciliation and calls upon the parties to cooperate with the International Mediation Committee chaired by the President of Gabon and with the joint United Nations/Organization of African Unity Special Envoy in reaching rapid agreement on peaceful transitional arrangements leading to the holding of democratic and free and fair elections with the participation of all parties.

The Council remains ready to consider how the United Nations can further contribute to a political settlement, including the possibility of a United Nations presence, on the basis of recommendations to be provided by the Secretary-General as soon as possible.

² S/PRST/1997/47.

14. The situation in Africa

Initial proceedings

Decision of 25 September 1997 (3819th meeting): statement by the President

At its 3819th meeting, held on 25 September 1997 in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations, the Security Council included the item entitled "The situation in Africa" in its agenda. Following the adoption of the agenda, and in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations, the Council invited Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of that Organization, to take a seat at the Council table.

The President (United States) stated that the Security Council was holding its first ministerial meeting on Africa, an unprecedented event taking place at a time when there was a new partnership in global responsibility, which was shared by all Council members and by the international community as a whole. Her delegation firmly believed that the discussions would spur common efforts to assist African peoples and nations to lay the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous future. She then drew the attention of the members of the Council to a letter dated 22 September 1997 from the representative of Argentina addressed to the President of the Security

Council,¹ transmitting a letter of the same date from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina addressed to the President of the Security Council, supporting the initiative to convene a meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the members of the Council to promote peace and security in Africa.

Opening the debate, President Mugabe of Zimbabwe thanked the Council for convening a special ministerial-level meeting to launch a new partnership between OAU and the United Nations. Security Council meetings and debates on African issues had been in the past often convened on an ad hoc basis to address crises and armed conflicts afflicting one country after another. The special meeting was, however, different in a unique way because it was being held against the backdrop of an African renaissance that was reshaping not only its societies but also the relations of the continent with the rest of the world. In the area of peace and security, Africa's determination to take greater responsibility to resolve its own crises, including armed conflicts, was being pursued in full cognizance of the relationship between African countries, OAU and the United Nations. He noted, however, that the Council was endowed with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of

¹ S/1997/730.