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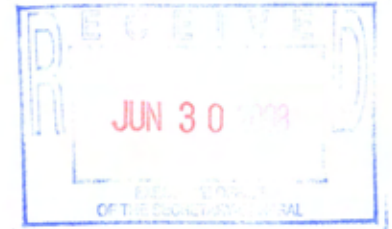
TO: Mr. Vijay Nambiar
A: Chef de Cabinet
Executive Office of the Secretary-General

DATE: 30 June 2008

REFERENCE:

THROUGH:
S/C DE:

FROM: Horst Heitmann
DE: Director *H-He*
SUBJECT: Security Council Affairs Division
OBJET: Department of Political Affairs



Security Council: Report on activities

Attached please find, for the Secretary-General's attention, a note on the proceedings of the Security Council on Friday, 27 June 2008 (a.m.).

cc: Ms. Spehar
Mr. Pascoe (O/R)
Mr. Menkerios (O/R)

JUN 29 2008

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Friday, 27 June 2008 (a.m.)

FORMAL MEETINGS

The situation in the Middle East (UNDOF)

At its 5626th meeting, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1821 (2008), *inter alia*, extending the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force until 31 December 2008. The President of the Council read out the text of a complementary statement (S/PRST/2008/25).

**The situation in the Middle East,
including the Palestinian Question**

At its 5927th meeting, the Security Council heard a briefing by Ms. Lisa Bittenheim, Director of the Asia and Pacific Division of the Department of Political Affairs (see S/PV.5727).

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

**The situation in the Middle East,
including the Palestinian Question**

Following the adjournment of the 5927th meeting, Council members convened in consultations to discuss the item.

Speaking first, Libya lamented that after over sixty years since its adoption, General Assembly resolution 181 (1947) calling for the creation of the State of Palestine, still remained unimplemented. While commending the Egyptian efforts that had led to a ceasefire agreement between the parties, Ambassador Mubarak regretted that Israel, despite its commitments made at the Annapolis conference, had intensified its settlement activities in the Palestinian territory. Against this background, Ambassador Mubarak circulated a draft resolution on behalf of the Arab Group to address Israeli settlements in the West Bank. He expressed the belief that the draft should not raise any difficulty for the "vast majority" of Council members. While noting that the issue might be "very sensitive" to "one delegation", he said that the recent visit to the region by Secretary of State Rice had given rise to optimism that the U.S. delegation might be prepared to endorse the

envisaged text. Ambassador Mubarak added that the draft raised the fundamental issue of the need for the settlement issue to be addressed for peace in the region to prevail.

Council members generally welcomed the recent positive developments in the Middle East, including the ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel between Hamas and Israel owing to Egypt's efforts; the outcomes of the Berlin conference in support of Palestinian civil security and rule of law; and the indirect talks between Syria and Israel under the Turkish aegis. Belgium and the United States welcomed the EU resuming its EUBAM mission at the Rafah border crossing. China called on the parties to "seize the rare window of opportunity" provided by the period of calm. Ambassador Liu believed that the situation allowed for optimism, and called on the parties to accelerate negotiations in accordance with their commitments made in Annapolis. Indonesia stressed that dialogue between the parties was critical for peace. Viet Nam said that recent developments, facilitated among others by Egypt, Turkey and Yemen, had proven the importance of regional engagement in resolving the conflict. The Russian Federation and the United States reminded that the Quartet meeting in September was to discuss the timing and agenda of a conference in Moscow to support the Annapolis process.

At the same time, delegations expressed concern at recent reports of violence despite the ceasefire and called on both parties to exercise restraint and to push the peace process forward. In addition, members expressed regret that the construction of settlements had continued and called on Israel to immediately freeze its settlement activities. The United Kingdom, echoed by others, cautioned that the continuation of settlements would undermine the peace process.

A number of speakers (e.g. Burkina Faso, Belgium) called for the improvement of socio-economic conditions in Gaza, as well as to intensify measures to support the Palestinian Authority. Specifically, the United States called for financial support to the Palestinian Authority, while France, among others, reiterated the need to support President Abbas' initiative to create a government of national unity.

Recalling that a lasting solution to the situation in the Gaza Strip could only be achieved through peaceful means, a number of delegations (e.g. France) renewed their call for a comprehensive solution in the framework of the Road Map, the Annapolis process and previous agreements between the parties.

In this regard, South Africa and the United States commended the last paragraph of Ms. Bутtenheim's briefing as clearly reflecting this goal. Ambassador Khalilzad and others reiterated the need to promote a two-State solution.

On the draft resolution, the United Kingdom and Croatia doubted that it would be "wise" to push forward a draft which covered only "one dimension" of the peace process. Ambassador Jurica argued that Israel's obligation to end settlement activities could not be dealt with in isolation from other obligations of both parties under the Roadmap. The United States believed that there could be no progress achieved by "polarizing" the issue and called for a balanced approach that took into account both sides' obligations. The Russian Federation, Viet Nam, Indonesia and China were ready to work constructively on the envisaged draft with a view to a consensus, while Belgium expressed the hope that the discussion on the text would serve as a basis for a constructive dialogue on all aspects of the problems in the region. Welcoming the draft resolution, South Africa noted its timeliness since the settlement issue was contributing to the cycle of violence.

Taking the floor again, Libya invited members to an experts meeting to discuss the draft resolution on Monday, 30 June. Responding to comments on the draft that it only covered one dimension of the issue, Ambassador Mubarak said that it was intentional as the Arab Group had insisted on not taking up "other controversial issues". In addition, he expressed his belief that the settlement question was a consensual issue, and that all other processes could not succeed while settlement activities continued. Taking up a comment that the draft might lead to the "polarization" of the Middle East dossier, he argued that the settlement issue by itself was "extremely polarizing", and for that reason, should be addressed.

Regarding Lebanon, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation, China, Viet Nam, Belgium, France and the United States, among others, expressed concern at the recent violence, in particular the incidents in Tripoli and the Bekaa Valley. They called for the full implementation of the Doha agreement, especially the swift formation of a government of national unity. Touching on the Sheba'a Farms issue, the United Kingdom and Italy stressed need to proceed with the delineation of the border between Lebanon and Syria as an important element to ease tensions in the Middle East, while United States called for the compliance with the arms embargo in the area.

In her concluding remarks, while acknowledging the fragility of the process, Ms. Lisa Bittenheim underscored the need to maintain the positive momentum with a view to making further progress.

Central African Republic

Special Representative of the Secretary General for the Central African Republic (CAR), Mr. François Lonseny Fall, introduced the report by the Secretary-General (S/2008/410), providing updates on key developments in the political, socio-economic, humanitarian, security and human rights areas since his previous briefing in December 2007. While noting progress in many areas, SRSG Fall described many challenges facing the country. The security situation remained particularly fragile with rampant armed banditry and reports of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) presence in the northeast.

SRSG Fall also described the developments since the report was issued. Of these, the most important was the signing on 21 June in Libreville of a comprehensive peace agreement (CPA) between the Government and two major rebel movements, APRD and UFDR. The third major rebel movement, the FDPC, did not sign it because its leader, currently located in Libya, refused to travel to Gabon fearing an arrest by the ICC; the agreement was still open to signature by the FDPC and other politico-military groups. The CPA reaffirmed the earlier ceasefire commitments of the three rebel movements and made provisions for DDR. While calling for amnesty, the agreement stipulated that it would not be granted for crimes under investigation by the ICC. In this regard, SRSG Fall said the recent arrest by the ICC of Jean-Pierre Bemba for atrocities committed by his troops in the CAR in 2002 and 2003 constituted an important milestone in the fight against impunity in the country. Another important recent development was the decision to place the CAR on the agenda of the Peace Building Commission.

Council members welcomed the "many positive developments taking place in the CAR" (South Africa), notably the signing of the CPA. In that regard, Belgium and others welcomed the facilitation that had been provided by Gabon and Libya. Members also commended the efforts at national reconciliation and national dialogue. At the same time, they pointed to the importance of the FDPC and other groups also signing on. Belgium stressed that dialogue to that end must begin quickly and be in good faith, but reminded members that the measures for amnesty called for in the 21 June agreement did not apply to

crimes that fell under ICC jurisdiction. Croatia also regarded the fight against impunity as a precondition for a comprehensive peace.

Council members welcomed the recent inclusion of the CAR on the PBC agenda. Ambassador Grauls (Belgium), who had been appointed as Chair of the PBC country-specific configuration on the CAR, said it should work to "crystallize" recent positive developments, but had to limit itself only to a number of high value-added priorities. In this regard, Ambassador Grauls mentioned the need to deliver means for the DDR process so that it could begin as soon as possible to take advantage of the CPA and the national dialogue process. He also singled out the central role of security sector reform in stabilizing the country. France was of the view that BONUCA should be extended, noting that in considering any changes to its mandate the recommendations of the SRSG should be taken into account.

While discussing the security situation, most members (Belgium, Burkina Faso, China, the Russian Federation and the United States) welcomed EUFOR and MINURCAT as contributing to its improvement. Italy called for EUFOR and MINURCAT to make full use of the mandate that they had been given by resolution 1778. Croatia announced that it was to deploy some 50 reconnaissance specialists by the fall of 2008. Many members, including Belgium, Costa Rica, Burkina Faso and Libya, expressed concern over the banditry problems and the reported LRA incursions. The United Kingdom hoped that the draft PRST on the LRA that was currently being negotiated would be adopted soon.

The United States held that despite all the international involvement, primary responsibility was with the government and people of the CAR.

France introduced a revised draft statement to the press, which was supported by other members and subsequently issued by the President (Attachment 2).

Taking the floor at the end of the discussion, SRSG Fall highlighted the most difficult challenges facing the CAR: SSR; the implementation of the CPA, especially the cantonment of rebel forces; the weakness of the defense and security forces as they still had to face other forces; economic difficulties and endemic poverty; and ensuring respect for human rights

Mélanie Bouvard/Nikolai Galkin/Davey McNab
SCSB/SCAD/27 June 2008

Attachment 1**Security Council press statement on Central African Republic**

The following Security Council press statement on the Central African Republic was read out today by Council President Zalmay Khalilzad (United States):

The members of the Security Council heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. François Lonseny Fall, on the situation in the Central African Republic.

The members of the Security Council welcomed the comprehensive peace agreement of 21 June signed in Libreville between the Central African Republic authorities, the Armée populaire pour la restauration de la démocratie (APRD) and the Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR). The members of the Security Council called on all other political-military groups in the country to join the comprehensive peace agreement.

The members of the Security Council commended President Omar Bongo Ondimba of Gabon and Colonel Muammar Al-Qadhafi of Libya for the assistance they provided to the parties in order to reach the comprehensive peace agreement and the agreements of Sirte (February 2007), Birao (April 2007) and Libreville (May 2008).

The members of the Security Council called upon the Government and the rebel movements to implement fully these agreements and to convene, as soon as possible, the inclusive political dialogue.

The members of the Security Council underlined that the overall political, security and socio-economic situation in the Central African Republic remains fragile and that further efforts are needed to fight poverty, insecurity, human rights violations and impunity.

The members of the Security Council expressed their appreciation for the deployment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) and the European Union operation (EUFOR) in the north-eastern part of the country, as well as for the decision of the Economic Community of the Central African States (ECCAS) to assume the overall political and operational command of the subregional multinational force (FOMUC).

The members of the Security Council welcomed the inclusion of the Central African Republic on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission and the creation of a country specific configuration chaired by Belgium. They expressed the view that, in order to support this work effectively, they would request the Secretary-General to make recommendations on how the mandate given to the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA) and to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as well as the configuration of BONUCA and the United Nations country team, should be revised.

Attachment 2

DRAFT PRESS STATEMENT ON ZIMBABWE

The members of the Security Council discussed Zimbabwe under Other Matters today.

The members of the Security Council recalled the Statement issued by the President of the Council on 23 June.

The members of the Security Council deeply regretted that the Government of Zimbabwe had gone ahead with the second round of the Presidential election on 27 June, despite the clear messages from the international community - including the Security Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Southern African Development Community and former and serving African Heads of State and Government - that free and fair elections were not possible under the current conditions of violence and intimidation, for which the Government of Zimbabwe bore responsibility.

The members of the Security Council affirmed that the results of the election on 27 June could have no credibility or legitimacy.

The members of the Security Council recalled that the results of the 29 March elections must be respected.

The members of the Security Council urged all parties to work through dialogue for a peaceful solution to the current crisis in Zimbabwe, including through engaging with international mediation efforts.

The members of the Security Council underlined their grave concern at the humanitarian situation and the need for the Government of Zimbabwe immediately to lift restrictions on the activities of humanitarian organizations.

The members of the Security Council expressed their intention to return to the issue, and to consider appropriate action, in the coming days.