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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
52ND MEETING
29 MAY 2006
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/2(LII)
Original: French

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION
ON THE SITUATION IN COTE D'IVOIRE

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The situation in Côte d'Ivoire was examined by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) during its 40th meeting held in Addis Ababa, on 6 October 2005. The meeting took place in a context characterized by an impasse in the implementation of the Pretoria Agreements of April and June 2005, as well as by the growing tension towards the end of the mandate of President Laurent Gbagbo and the divergent legal and political conclusions drawn from it by the Ivorian parties.

2. At the end of the meeting, the PSC, endorsing the observation of the extraordinary summit of ECOWAS on the end of the mandate of President Laurent Gbagbo on 30 October 2005, as well as the impossibility, acknowledged by all Ivorian parties, of holding presidential elections on the scheduled date, decided that the arrangements agreed upon in the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement of January 2003 would continue from 31 October 2005 for a period not exceeding twelve (12) months, on the basis of the following modalities:

- (i) President Gbagbo shall remain President during the above-mentioned period;
- (ii) a new Prime Minister acceptable to all signatories of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement shall be appointed. The Government, which he will lead, shall be composed of personalities proposed by the Ivorian parties signatories to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement;
- (iii) the Government shall continue to discharge the responsibilities and tasks assigned to it by the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra III Agreements. The Ministers shall be accountable to the Prime Minister who shall have full authority over his cabinet;
- (iv) the Prime Minister shall not be eligible for the elections to be organized, in accordance with the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement;
- (v) to assist the Government in the implementation of its programme and to consolidate and strengthen the existing follow-up mechanisms, an International Working Group (IWG) shall be established at ministerial level, which shall meet once a month in Côte d'Ivoire to evaluate, monitor and follow-up the peace process, including the roadmap agreed upon in Pretoria and all other subsequent Agreements, by stating the degree of cooperation of the parties and other actors concerned, their respect of the commitments made and, if necessary, any attitude likely to hamper the successful conclusion of the peace and reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire, and make appropriate recommendations to the PSC and to the UN Security Council. The IWG shall receive regular reports from the Mediation Group put in place by the PSC;

- (vi) the IWG shall be chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, in his capacity as the representative of the Chairperson of the AU. The office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Special Representative of the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS in Côte d'Ivoire and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the AU Commission in Côte d'Ivoire shall serve as secretariat. The secretariat shall be coordinated by the United Nations;
- (vii) the IWG shall be composed as follows: Benin, Ghana, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, United Nations, African Union, ECOWAS, European Union, International Organisation of La Francophonie, World Bank and the International Monetary Fund;
- (viii) daily mediation shall be undertaken by the following representatives of the IWG: the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the High Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the Elections in Côte d'Ivoire, the Special Envoy of South Africa, the Special Representative of the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS in Côte d'Ivoire and the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in Côte d'Ivoire. This Mediation Group shall be chaired by the Special Envoy of South Africa, in his capacity as representative of the AU Mediator;
- (ix) the Ivorian parties shall be invited as soon as possible to a Forum for National Dialogue in Yamoussoukro.

3. This report provides an update on the implementation of the decision of the PSC and the evolution of the situation since October 2005.

II. APPROVAL BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL OF THE DECISION OF THE PSC

4. During its meeting of 6 October 2005, the PSC decided to submit its decision to the UN Security Council to obtain its support and, to this end, requested me to take all necessary measures. It is in this context that, on 7 October 2005, I sent a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to forward the PSC communiqué and to inform him of my decision to dispatch to New York the Peace and Security Commissioner to address the Security Council. The Security Council met on 14 October 2005 to examine the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. At this meeting, the Security Council heard a briefing by Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji, Nigeria's Minister of Foreign Affairs; Saïd Djinnit, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security; Pierre Schori, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Côte d'Ivoire; and Antonio Monteiro, High Representative for the Elections.

5. In the statement issued thereafter, the Council appreciated the efforts of the AU, in particular President Thabo Mbeki of the Republic of South Africa and President Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairperson of the AU, the ECOWAS, the leaders of the region, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the High Representative for the Elections, to promote peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire, and reiterated its full support for these efforts. The Council endorsed the decision of the PSC on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire adopted at its 40th

meeting and expressed its intention to take rapidly the necessary measures to support as appropriate its implementation, in order to organize free, fair, open, transparent and credible elections as soon as possible and no later than 30 October 2006. The Council took note, in particular, of the request of the PSC for an increase in the strength of the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), without prejudice to any future decision or commitment in this regard.

6. The Council reaffirmed that it endorsed the Linas-Marcoussis, Accra III and Pretoria Agreements, and demanded that all Ivorian parties signatories to these Agreements, as well as all the Ivorian parties concerned, implement fully and without delay their commitments under those Agreements, in accordance with the decision of the PSC. The Council welcomed the visit that the high level delegation led by Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Thabo Mbeki was going to make in Côte d'Ivoire, expressed its full support to it, and urged all Ivorian parties to cooperate fully and in good faith with this delegation, in particular in order to ensure the rapid implementation of the decision of the PSC and the early appointment of a Prime Minister acceptable to all parties, and to guarantee, with the support of the United Nations, the organization of free, fair, open, transparent and credible elections.

7. On 21 October 2005, the Security Council adopted resolution 1633 (2005). In that resolution, the Council reaffirmed its endorsement of the observation of ECOWAS and the PSC on the end of the mandate of President Laurent Gbagbo on 30 October 2005 and the impossibility of organizing presidential elections on the scheduled date, and of the decision of the PSC, including its decision on the fact that President Gbagbo shall remain as Head of State from 31 October 2005 for a period not exceeding 12 months. The Council demanded that all the parties signatories to the Linas-Marcoussis, Accra III and Pretoria Agreements, as well as all the Ivorian parties concerned, implement the decision fully and without delay.

8. The Council expressed its support for the establishment of the IWG at a ministerial level and the Mediation Group, both of which should be co-chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. It urged the IWG to meet as soon as possible, and affirmed that the secretariat of the IWG shall be coordinated by the United Nations, in accordance with the PSC decision.

9. The Council urged the Chairperson of the AU, the Chairperson of ECOWAS and the AU Mediator to consult immediately with all the Ivorian parties in order to ensure that a new Prime Minister acceptable to all Ivorian parties signatories to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement shall be appointed by 31 October 2005, and to maintain close contact with the Secretary-General throughout the process. The Council expressed its full support for paragraph 10 article (iii) of the PSC decision, which stressed that the Ministers shall be accountable to the Prime Minister, who shall have full authority over his cabinet. The Council stressed that the Prime Minister must have all the necessary powers according to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, and all the governmental financial, material and human resources, particularly with regard to security, defence and electoral matters, to ensure the effective functioning of the Government, to guarantee security and the redeployment of the administration and public services throughout the territory of Côte d'Ivoire, to lead the programme of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the operation of disarming and dismantling of militias, and to ensure the fairness of the

identification process and of voter registration, leading to the organization of free, open, fair and transparent elections, with the support of the United Nations.

10. Noting that the mandate of the National Assembly would end by 16 December 2005, the Council invited the IWG to consult with all the Ivorian parties, in liaison as appropriate with the Forum for National Dialogue as referred to in paragraph 11 of the PSC decision, with the view to ensure that the Ivorian institutions function normally until the holding of the elections in Côte d'Ivoire, and to keep the Security Council and the PSC informed in that regard.

11. The Council considered, as noted by the PSC in paragraph 9 of its decision, that additional measures were required to expedite the implementation of some provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis, Accra III and Pretoria Agreements, in particular the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, the dismantling and disarmament of militias and the creation of conditions for holding free, fair, open and transparent elections, including the identification process and the registration of voters. The Council requested the IWG to draw up as soon as possible a roadmap in consultation with all Ivorian parties, with particular emphasis on issues pertaining to the appointment of a new Prime Minister and the implementation of all outstanding issues, with a view to hold free, fair, open and transparent elections as soon as possible and no later than 31 October 2006.

12. Furthermore, the Council:

- demanded that the *Forces Nouvelles* proceed without delay with the DDR programme in order to facilitate the restoration of the authority of the State throughout the national territory, the reunification of the country and the organization of the elections as soon as possible;
- affirmed that the identification process must start without delay;
- demanded that all Ivorian parties stop all incitement to hatred and violence in radio and television broadcasting, as well as in any other media;
- demanded also the immediate disarmament and dismantling of militias throughout the national territory;
- recalled paragraphs 5 and 7 of the decision of the PSC, and demanded that all Ivorian parties refrain from any use of force and violence, including against civilians and foreigners, and from all kinds of disruptive street protests;
- urged countries neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire to prevent any cross-border movement of combatants or arms into Côte d'Ivoire;
- Reiterated its serious concern at all violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Côte d'Ivoire, and urged the Ivorian authorities to investigate these violations without delay in order to put an end to impunity.

III. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SITUATION

13. The period following the PSC meeting was dominated by the consultations led by the AU for the appointment of a Prime Minister and thereafter by the efforts of the latter to create an enabling environment for dialogue and the implementation of the roadmap to end the crisis. It will be recalled that, in the decision it adopted at its 40th meeting, the PSC decided to dispatch a high level delegation to Côte d'Ivoire that would include President Olusegun Obasanjo, the then Current Chairperson of the AU, and President Thabo Mbeki, AU Mediator, to meet with President Laurent Gbagbo and the other Ivorian parties regarding the implementation of the said decision.

14. In this connection, President Obasanjo proceeded to Côte d'Ivoire on 4 November 2005 to hold consultations with the Ivorian parties in order to ensure that a Prime Minister is appointed. He invited the Ivorian parties to provide a limited list of potential candidates for the post of Prime Minister. On 22 November 2005, President Obasanjo returned to Abidjan with President Mbeki and President Mamadou Tandja, ECOWAS Chairman, with proposed names for the post of Prime Minister. Since the proposals were not accepted by the Ivorian parties, Presidents Obasanjo and Mbeki, who proceeded once again to Abidjan on 4 December 2005, announced, on that occasion, the appointment of Charles Konan Banny, former Governor of the Central Bank of West African States, to the post of Prime Minister. In the meanwhile, President Gbagbo, at the end of his mandate on 30 October, had, in an address to the Nation, indicated that he was staying in power because of the ongoing occupation of a part of the national territory by the Forces Nouvelles, invoking in this regard a decision of the Constitutional Council dated 29 October. This announcement was rejected by the Forces Nouvelles and opposition parties, who then suspended their participation in the Council of Ministers.

15. After his appointment, the Prime Minister went to Niger, Nigeria, South Africa and Congo, for talks with the leaders of those countries. Similarly, he held extensive consultations with the Ivorian parties, at the end of which he formed his Government on 28 December 2005, which, on the whole, was accepted. It comprised 31 Ministers, of which 7 were from FPI, 6 from the Forces Nouvelles, 5 from PDCI-RDA, 5 from RDR, 4 from the civil society and 1 from each of the following parties: MFA, UDPCI, UDCY and PIT.

16. Upon his assumption of duty, the Prime Minister declared his willingness and readiness to work in close collaboration with the Head of State. He underscored the need for a social truce in order to create a conducive environment for the organization of elections and made his priorities the restoration of confidence, dialogue and the search for compromise. It was in this spirit that a Government-sponsored seminar on the roadmap to end the crisis, proposed to the Prime Minister by the IWG, on 14 January, was held in Yamoussoukro from 9 to 11 February 2006. The seminar made it possible for the Government to take ownership of the roadmap and paved the way for a debate on important issues pertaining to the DDR, the redeployment of the administration, the identification and the elections. The roadmap is centred around the following components: governance and the political process; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants; disarmament and dismantling of the militias; the redeployment of the administration; the identification and citizenship; the electoral process; the re-establishment of

security with the help of the Impartial Forces; the respect of human rights; sanctions and obstructions to freedom of movement; follow-up of media and humanitarian action.

17. In the light of the recommendations of the Yamoussoukro seminar, the Government took a number of measures, prominent among which were the setting up of a working group for the identification process; the organization of exams in the North of the country starting from 27 February 2006, with the logistical support of the UNOCI; the debate in Cabinet on land problems; the establishment of a committee for the rehabilitation of the barracks; and the adoption of a plan for the rehabilitation of Radio Television Ivoirienne (RTI) so as to cover the entire nation, with a budgetary appropriation of CFA 5.5 billion, as well as supplementary measures, including security measures, to enable RTI to support the process aimed at ending the crisis.

18. Driven by this spirit of dialogue, the Prime Minister, on 28 February 2006, convened in Yamoussoukro a meeting of the main political leaders of Côte d'Ivoire, namely Président Laurent Gbagbo, Henri Konan Bédié of PDCI-RDA, Alassane Dramane Ouattara of RDR and Guillaume Soro of the Forces Nouvelles. Among the encouraging results that emanated from the meeting, mention can be made of the commitment to respect the full implementation of previous Agreements, including the holding of elections within the stipulated time frame; the invitation to the Head of State and the Prime Minister to consult each other in order to avoid possible conflicts of interpretation of the Constitution and resolution 1633; the decision on an immediate resumption of dialogue between the Commands of the *Forces de défense et de sécurité de Côte d'Ivoire (FDSCI)* and the *Forces armées des Forces Nouvelles (FAFN)*, regarding the dismantling of the militias and the DDR; the agreement to conduct the identification process and the registration of voters simultaneously; the support for the measures taken by the Government to ensure equal access by all parties to the RTI; the need to meet frequently to exchange views on the peace process and ensure that political life takes place in a peaceful atmosphere; the acceptance of the arbitration of the High Representative for the Elections regarding the Bureau of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the decision to create a fourth post of Vice-President at the level of the said Bureau.

19. The Yamoussoukro meeting helped to improve the political climate and to facilitate the return to Abidjan, on 14 March 2006, of Guillaume Soro, Secretary-General of *Forces Nouvelles*, to rejoin the Government after 16 months of absence.

20. Subsequently, the Prime Minister went on a working visit to France, where he met the highest authorities of the State, and to the United States of America, where he held talks with Paul Wolfowitz, President of the World Bank, and Rodrigo de Renato, Director General of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), on 24 April and 25 April 2006, respectively. The talks focused on financial assistance by these institutions to the peace process and the resumption of aid, which had been suspended since the outbreak of the crisis. On 27 April, he addressed the Security Council; he seized the opportunity to ask for the strengthening of UNOCI capacities. He later proceeded to Belgium, where he met with European Union officials, including Javier Solana, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, and Louis Michel, Commissioner for Development, who pledged, on behalf of the EU, 40 million Euros to be released shortly to enable the country to address the emergency health and water problems facing it.

21. In spite of the progress made, the period under consideration also witnessed difficulties. With regard to the IEC, it should be noted that its functioning was disrupted for several months after it was re-constituted in mid October 2005, as some of its members decided to boycott its sessions to protest against the procedure used in electing its Bureau. Following an appeal filed by FPI, the Administrative Chamber of the Supreme Court nullified the election of the Bureau of the said Commission. Availing himself of his arbitration powers, the High Representative for the Elections confirmed that the election of the Bureau of the Commission was in conformity with the Pretoria Agreement. In a statement made by its President on 23 February 2006, the Security Council endorsed the arbitration. The stalemate was only broken after the Yamoussoukro meeting at which the Ivorian parties agreed on the attribution of the posts within the Bureau of the IEC in such a way as to ensure equitable representation of the political forces.

22. It is also worth noting that the controversy surrounding the end of the mandate of the National Assembly remains a topical issue. Indeed, at its meeting of 15 January 2006, the IWG noted that the mandate of National Assembly, which had expired on 16 December 2006, should not be extended. This was met with a violent reaction by the youth organizations close to President Gbagbo who carried out disruptive protests in Abidjan and in the hinterland, particularly in the western part of the country between 16 and 20 January 2005. To put an end to these acts of violence, President Obasanjo went to Abidjan on 18 January 2006, where he met with President Gbagbo, Prime Minister Konan Banny and other political leaders. The communiqué that was issued at the end of these meetings states, among other things, that the IWG has no the power to dissolve the National Assembly and that it has not dissolved it; the communiqué calls on the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister to continue with the discussions in order to find a political solution to the crisis. The issuance of this communiqué cooled down tempers among the “Young Patriots” who immediately put an end to the street protests.

23. At its 8th Ordinary Session held in Khartoum, Sudan, from 16 to 21 January 2006, the Executive Council examined the situation in Côte d’Ivoire. On that occasion, the Executive Council among other things:

- expressed deep concern at the serious events that took place in January 2006 in Côte d’Ivoire and particularly regretted the death of civilians and damage to property that occurred during those events;
- noted with concern that the recurrence of such serious events can only undermine the sustained efforts made by the African Union, ECOWAS, the United Nations and the international community at large, in support of the peace process;
- condemned in the strongest terms the acts of violence that were directed against UNOCI and its assets, as well as other acts of violence and intimidation;
- requested all concerned parties to refrain immediately from all acts of violence, issuance of inflammatory statements and other actions that may further aggravate the situation, and to commit themselves in earnest to the peace process and to create conditions propitious to the attainment of a lasting peace and reconciliation;

- reiterated its full support to the efforts exerted by the IWG, the Mediation Group, as well as by the United Nations;
- appealed to all the parties to extend full cooperation to UNOCI, the IWG and the Mediation Group, in order to facilitate the full and effective implementation of all Agreements reached as well as United Nations Security Council resolution 1633(2005).

24. On 27 January 2006, the spokesperson for the Presidency of the Republic read out a communiqué in which President Gbagbo informed the Nation that the National Assembly was still functioning with all its powers. The Democracy and Peace Parliamentary Group comprising PDCI, RDA, UDPCI, MFA and *Solidarité* decided to boycott the National Assembly sessions. Despite the statement of the United Nations Secretary-General underscoring the need to refrain from any unilateral action, and re-echoed by the fourth meeting of the IWG, the National Assembly convened on 9 February 2006 with a quorum of 102 members of Parliament out of a total of 202, in the absence of the majority of the opposition members of Parliament.

25. At that session, the deputies decided to extend the terms of office of the Mayors and the General Counsellors. Subsequently, the Speaker of the National Assembly convened a new ordinary session on 26 April 2006. Out of the 202 deputies, only 100 were present; 10 asked to be excused and 92 were absent. The Peace and Democracy Parliamentary Group renewed its boycott. The Speaker of the National Assembly reacted by modifying the rules of procedure of the National Assembly to reinforce sanctions against the absentees. Quite clearly, the question of the mandate of the National Assembly remains a source of conflict among the Ivorian political class.

26. Furthermore, issues of disarmament and identification were at the centre of a dispute between the parties and organizations of the presidential camp, on the one hand, and the opposition, on the other hand. The presidential camp argued that disarmament should precede identification to prevent identity fraud, especially in the areas under the control of the Forces Nouvelles. For its part, the opposition felt that since the problem of identity was at the core of the Ivorian crisis, the identification must go hand in hand with disarmament because they are interrelated. During his visit to Côte d'Ivoire from 6 to 8 April 2006, President Denis Sassou-Nguesso, Current Chairperson of the AU, undertook wide ranging consultations with the Ivorian parties. During the press conference that he gave at the end of his meeting with the five main political leaders of Ivory Coast who attended the 28 February 2006 Yamoussoukro Summit, he declared: *"We have agreed that it was imperative that the disarmament and identification processes are carried out concomitantly, simultaneously, without delay, under the authority of the Government and the Prime Minister"*. However, the parties and organizations of the presidential camp continue to demand that the disarmament precede the identification.

27. On the same issue of disarmament and identification processes, the spokesperson of the President of the Republic issued a press release on 25 April 2006 which sums up the position of the Head of State: *"For the President of the Republic, disarmament, followed by the redeployment of the administration, must precede public hearings. It is not a prerequisite. It is simply a question of common*

sense and logic. And the President personally still maintains this position. However, disarmament, redeployment of the administration, organization and holding of elections fall within the purview of the Prime Minister and of the Government. This is why the President of the Republic, as guarantor of the smooth functioning of the institutions, accepts the concomitance of these operations as a way out of the crisis because the persons or organs responsible for their implementation have accepted it.

28. As for the Ivorian press, particularly the written press, it is in the most part affiliated to the political organizations. As such, it is very active in relaying and blowing out of proportion messages of hostility by politicians against personalities or organizations of a different political shade. It also attacks some countries and international organizations and does not hesitate to twist the facts to suit propaganda rather than the reality. Its attitude poses a real risk of derailing the ongoing process in these difficult times.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PEACE PROCESS

29. With only five months to go before the presidential elections, key aspects of the peace process have not seen any major progress. This applies to the DDR programme and the disarmament and dismantling of the militias, the identification process, the establishment of voters' lists and the redeployment of the administration.

a) DDR Operation and Dismantling of the Militias

30. The PSC will recall that, on 9 July 2005, the commands of the *Forces Armées Nationales de Côte d'Ivoire (FANCI)* and FAFN adopted a timetable for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. Following this arrangement, cantonment sites were prepared, 8 for the FANCI and 9 for the FAFN. However, towards the end of the mandate of the President of the Republic, on 30 October 2005, a political crisis arose, whose direct consequence was a breakdown in the dialogue between the ex-belligerents. In addition, the cantonment sites which had been prepared began to deteriorate.

31. On 24 March 2006, General Gaston Ouassénan Koné was appointed Coordinator of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (PNDDR). In this capacity, he recently undertook a tour of the Western part of the country during which he contacted the various militias in the West, namely the *Front de Liberation du Grand Ouest (FLGO)*, *l'Association Démocratique du Grand Ouest (ADGO)*, the *Mouvement Ivoirien pour la Liberation de l'Ouest de la Côte d'Ivoire (MILOCI)* and *l'Association Patriotique Tribu WE (APWE)*, to sensitize them on their dismantling. All the militias seem willing to adhere to the principle, on condition that they are taken on board in the reintegration programme.

32. On 1 April 2006, the Chiefs of Staff of FDSCI and FAFN met in Yamoussoukro in the presence of the Prime Minister to mark the official resumption of the dialogue after several months of interruption. On that occasion, the Prime Minister called on the two parties to update the July 2005 timetable. The parties met again in Bouake on 4 April 2006, in the presence of the Minister of Defence, to seriously get down to business. However, those meetings were once again

interrupted following an incident, on 12 April 2006, that occurred in Tiebissou, where the FAFN delegation which was going to Yamoussoukro to take part in the dialogue turned back after elements of the FDSCI, who were manning a road block, insisted on searching its vehicles.

33. Finally, at the initiative of the Prime Minister, the meeting of the commands of FDSCI and FAFN took place in Abidjan on 17 May, under the chairmanship of his Director of Cabinet. On that occasion, the two parties agreed that, in compliance with the principle of concomitance, the public hearings would begin on 18 May at the sites earmarked for the purpose, as well as the pre-assembly of the forces, and that the military dialogue would resume in Yamoussoukro on 31 May. However, the *Force Nouvelles* demanded that the disarmament and dismantling of the militias take place before the assembly of the combatants.

b) Identification and preparation of voters' lists

34. The issue of identification is a subject of major concern and an essential component of all the peace agreements, precisely because a large number of Ivorians do not have identity cards. With the debate on «Ivoirity», this issue has been politicised. Some fear that genuine Ivorians will be denied citizenship, while others worry that there may be massive fraud in the determination of citizenship of foreigners with the complicity of political parties for electioneering purposes. The Government opted to conduct the identification process and the registration of voters simultaneously. This decision was reached by consensus during the meeting of the five principal Ivorian political leaders in Yamoussoukro on 28 February 2006.

35. It is estimated that about 3.5 million Ivorians and foreigners do not have birth certificates. The situation is intended to be resolved through judgments delivered during public hearings, which will precede the identification process. The decision to simultaneously undertake the identification and the establishment of voters' lists requires the coordination, by the Office of the Prime Minister, of the different structures involved in these operations.

c) Redeployment of the Administration

36. There is an urgent need to begin the redeployment of the administration in view of its essential role in the conduct of the electoral process. To be credible, the identification process should be carried out in the presence of an administration which represents the State's authority throughout the territory, including the areas under the control of the *Forces Nouvelles*. To date, with the exception of a few attempts, such as the re-opening of the University of Bouaké and the organization of examinations in the Northern region, as well as the return of civil servants in the education and health fields, no large-scale operation has been carried out in this regard. The Prime Minister has made this matter a priority. In this regard, the National Steering Committee for the Redeployment of the Administration started its operations on 16 February 2006, with the assistance of UNOCI, following its restructuring to boost its effectiveness. Similarly, the necessary security conditions have also to be created.

d) Organization of a Forum for National Dialogue

37. The consultations carried out by the Mediation Group during December 2005 and January 2006 with political organizations and the civil society showed that the majority of Ivorians would like a Forum for National Dialogue to be held. Some members of the civil society who felt that they were excluded or forgotten by the peace agreements wish to seize the opportunity provided by such a Forum to make their voices heard. Based on previous experiences which were ill conceived, badly carried out and yielded no results, a few political parties expressed reservations. Others are opposed to this Forum, arguing that there is a risk of it being merely an occasion for an exchange of abuse or even insults among participants.

38. Following consultations by the Prime Minister with different parties, he concluded that the Government should organize this Forum, which is perfectly in keeping with his policy of dialogue. After the political dialogue with the five main Ivorian political leaders, he met with the leaders of parties signatories to the different Agreements to sensitize them on the «spirit of Yamoussoukro », requesting that they enlighten their followers. He then organized an economic forum on 31 March 2006. He also intends to organize a social forum shortly. This initiative is in line with the objective of the 40th PSC meeting on this issue.

V. DEPLOYMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF UNOCI

39. During the period under review, UNOCI, with the support of the Operation Licorne, has continued to play an important role in the efforts to bring the peace process to an early conclusion. As at 31 March, the overall strength of UNOCI was 6,898 military personnel against an authorized strength of 7,090 – the shortfall is due to the lack of a much-needed military aviation unit for which negotiations are underway with Ghana, while the police component of the Operation stood at 696 personnel. In its resolution 1652 (2006) adopted on 24 January 2006, the Security Council decided that the respective mandates of UNOCI and of the French forces which support it shall be extended until 15 December 2006.

40. The PSC will recall that, in its communiqué of 6 October 2005, it affirmed its support to UNOCI and requested the United Nations Security Council to provide UNOCI with all necessary means to enable it effectively discharge its mandate and to further consider authorizing a substantial increase of its strength. In its resolution 1633 (2005) referred to above, the Security Council took note of the request and expressed its intention to review the troop level of UNOCI by the end of UNOCI's mandate on 24 January 2006, in light of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

41. Subsequently, the UN Secretariat dispatched a technical team to UNOCI in November 2005, to assess the Operation's troop and police strength, taking into account the new circumstances emanating from Security Council resolution 1633 (2005). In the light of the team's findings, the Secretary-General, in his Seventh Progress Report on UNOCI dated 3 January 2006, recommended that UNOCI's troop strength be increased by four battalions (3,400 troops), with the commensurate increase in civilian staffing to support this deployment. With regard to the UNOCI police component, he recommended that three additional formed police units (375 officers) and 100 civilian police officers be deployed to the Mission immediately.

42. On 24 January 2006, the Security Council, in its resolution 1652 (2006), expressed its intention to keep the tasks and the troop level of UNOCI under review, in the light of the progress in the implementation of the roadmap established by the IWG, in order to lead to the organization of free, fair, open and transparent elections no later than 31 October 2006. In this respect, it is worth mentioning that, in the wake of the crisis of mid-January 2006, and following a letter from the Secretary-General dated 1 February 2006, the Security Council, through its resolution 1657 (2006), authorized the temporary redeployment of an infantry company from the United Nation Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to UNOCI, in order to provide extra security coverage for the UN personnel and property, and to perform other tasks mandated to UNOCI.

43. However, as indicated by the Secretary-General, in his Eighth Progress Report, dated 11 April 2006, the reinforcement is limited, and has not been extended after 31 March 2006. Consequently, he once again stressed the need for urgent decision on the reinforcements proposed in his Report of 3 January, especially in view of the decision implied in Security Council resolution 1667 (2006) to move the company, whose redeployment was authorized by resolution 1657 (2006), back to UNMIL. The Secretary-General further highlighted the need to considerably enhance the capacity of UNOCI to enable the Operation deal with the established timelines for the implementation of the roadmap and curb further disturbances. The Secretary-General stated that it was essential to ensure that the credibility of UNOCI and its role in the peace process were not challenged again and that the Operation was fully equipped to effectively support the objectives set forth by Prime Minister Banny. He concluded that his recommendations of 3 January 2006 were even more pressing and that the situation in Côte d'Ivoire had important regional dimensions, and that its deterioration would inevitably have negative security implications, affecting primarily Liberia and Sierra Leone, where hard-won stability is still fragile. I would like to seize this opportunity to reiterate the request of the PSC for the reinforcement of UNOCI and to call on the Security Council to give a rapid and favourable response to the proposals made by the Secretary-General, as contained in his Seventh Progress Report.

VI. IMPOSITION OF INDIVIDUALS MEASURES AGAINST PERSONS DESIGNATED BY THE COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED BY PARAGRAPH 14 OF RESOLUTION 1572 (2004)

44. In its communiqué of 6 October 2005, the PSC reaffirmed its support to the individual measures provided for in paragraphs 9 and 11 of United Nations Security Council resolution 1572 (2004) of 15 November 2004. Subsequently, the Security Council, in its resolution 1633 (2005) of 21 October 2005, reaffirmed its readiness to impose those measures against any person who blocks the implementation of the peace process, as defined in particular by the roadmap, who is determined as responsible for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Côte d'Ivoire, who incites publicly hatred and violence, or against any person or entity who is determined to be in violation of the arms embargo.

45. It is against this background that, on 7 February 2006, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) imposed targeted sanctions on two leaders of the Young Patriots, Charles Blé Goudé and Eugene Djué, among others, for their involvement in the incidents that affected Abidjan in

January 2006. Sanctions were also imposed on Fofié Kouakou, Zone Commander of the *Forces Nouvelles* in Korhogo, for his responsibility in the recruitment of child soldiers, forced labor, arbitrary arrests and gross human rights abuses committed by elements under his control.

46. In the statement issued by its President on 27 April 2006, the Security Council underlined that targeted measures are to be imposed against persons to be designated by the Committee established by resolution 1572 (2004), who, among other things, block the implementation of the peace process, including by attacking or obstructing the action of UNOCI, of the French forces, of the High Representative for the Elections or the IWG, or who incite publicly hatred and violence.

VII. SECURITY AND HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

47. Among the difficulties encountered at the security level since the 40th meeting of the PSC, mention should be made of the attack by an armed group against the two military camps of Akouédo in Abidjan, on 2 January 2006. Although it failed, the attack awakened the sense of insecurity in the population and of distrust within the political class and all Ivorian parties.

48. In the same vein, the demonstrations organized by the Young Patriots, from 16 to 19 January 2006, deteriorated the security situation. In Abidjan, they paralysed the city and disrupted economic and administrative activities, schools and universities, and impeded the free movement of the Impartial Forces. In some areas under the control of the Government, especially in Guiglo, Daloa, San Pedro and Yamoussoukro, they triggered general insecurity. As indicated in the Progress Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in the West of the country, the personnel of the United Nations, humanitarian organizations and the barracks of UNOCI forces were targets of violent attacks. These events resulted in the death of five demonstrators, caused the retreat to the zone of confidence of UNOCI troops positioned at Guiglo, Toulepleu, Duékoué and Bloléquin, the departure of humanitarian staff and the evacuation from Côte d'Ivoire of about 400 UN staff. The vacuum thus created was highly detrimental to about 14,000 refugees, displaced persons and ethnic minorities, dependent on activities of United Nations agencies and other humanitarian organisations, and who found themselves abandoned to their fate.

49. As indicated above, at its 8th ordinary session held in Khartoum from 16 to 21 January 2006, the Executive Council expressed profound concern in the face of these grave events and regretted in particular the loss of civilian life and material damage that resulted from these events.

50. Furthermore, the Progress Report mentioned above underscores the fact that the Western part of Côte d'Ivoire was the scene of several incidents which pitted the Operation Licorne forces against FANCI. From 26 February to 2 March, there was an attempt to obstruct the freedom of movement of French troops around the villages of Bouenneu and Zouan Hounien. Concomitantly, French troops, on two occasions, were subjected to harassment by soldiers of FANCI who infiltrated the zone of confidence. It was not until after the meeting of the commanders of UNOCI and Operation Licorne, on the one hand, and of the Commander in Chief of FANCI, on the other hand, that the tension subsided.

51. Since mid-March, UNOCI has endeavoured to redeploy troops to the West of the country. These troops are made of infantry units and police forces with a crowd control capacity. However, according to the United Nations, local authorities and some radical groups did not hide their opposition to this redeployment.

52. During the period under review, the humanitarian situation remained precarious and of serious concern. The violent demonstrations in January 2006 and the constantly deteriorating security situation in the West had had grave implications on the respect of fundamental human rights. Education, health, water and sanitation were also sources of continued concern.

53. After several postponements, secondary school examinations in the Northern region were finally organized from 27 February to 4 March 2006. For the BAC (baccalaureate) and BEPC (first secondary school diploma) examinations, the levels of participation were estimated at 57% and 62%, respectively. A compensatory session is envisaged for those who were absent. For primary school pupils who sat for their examinations on 14 March 2006, the level of participation in the CEPE was 73%. A financial contribution by UNDP and the EU helped organize these examinations. Security was ensured by UNOCI forces. After over three years of closure due to the crisis, the University of Bouaké and the Korhogo Research Unit reopened their doors on 28 March 2006. Many students are registered in these institutions.

54. There are still acute water supply difficulties in the country despite the combined efforts of the Human Consumption Water Department of the Ministry of Economic Infrastructure, UNICEF and NGOs working in this area. To find a lasting solution to the water issue, a National Emergency Water Committee was established. It is chaired by the Minister of Economic Infrastructure. The EU recently granted assistance for the supply of potable water, sanitation and health.

55. The new «Central Emergency Response Fund» (CERF) was officially launched in New York on 9 March 2006, at a meeting organized by the United Nations Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief. Thanks to the latter's advocacy for the implementation of a humanitarian reform in Côte d'Ivoire, this country was the very first beneficiary of this Fund for the amount of US\$950,000. Through the specialized agencies of the United Nations System, the vulnerable populations in the West of Côte d'Ivoire will receive assistance in the area of protection, food security, water, sanitation and health. This concerns particularly the 7,000 displaced persons at the temporary reception centre of Guiglo, host families, children below the age of five and the epidemiological monitoring of nearly 250,000 persons.

56. Many human rights violations, particularly summary and extra-judiciary executions, physical violence, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment have been reported in the two areas. These exactions are attributable to the FDSCI, the FAFN, armed gangs and highway robbers. In January 2006, during the attacks against the two camps of Akouédo, some Embassies of West African countries protested against the arrest of their citizens alleged to be assailants and demanded their release. Furthermore, violence against women increased. Between the months of August and December 2005, two hundred cases of violence were reported to the UNOCI, 41% of which were rape cases. Some incumbent Ministers have been

aggressed, raising condemnation by the Council of Ministers and the IWG. The Guiglo Forum held on 10 December 2005, on the occasion of the commemoration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, highlighted in no uncertain terms the persistence of impunity. The civil society groups present at this meeting recommended the establishment of a national coalition to combat impunity.

57. In the area of health, indicators are alarming. Diseases that were controlled in the past are returning in force and gaining ground. In the West and North of the country, almost all the health centres are only operating through the support of humanitarian partners. At this juncture, it should be noted that, within the framework of support to AIDS patients, the Ivorian Government has decided to reduce the cost of antiretroviral.

58. In the area of food security, the World Food Programme (WFP), which suspended of its activities in Côte d'Ivoire following the events of January 2006, has resumed them. In the course of his visit to the North of the country in April 2006, the WFP Regional Director for West Africa disclosed the particularly serious food situation in that region.

59. With regard to the movement of populations, the West of the country continued to witness continued displacements due to clashes between different communities living there. These clashes have undermined the social cohesion. Furthermore, the repatriation of Liberian refugees continued. Between September 2004 and April 2006, close to 15,000 refugees returned to their country.

VIII. FUNCTIONING OF THE FOLLOW-UP MECHANISMS

60. As indicated above, the PSC, at its meeting of 6 October 2005, decided on the establishment of a follow-up mechanism with a view to assisting the Government in the implementation of its programme and consolidating existing mechanisms. It was in this context that it was decided to establish the IWG and the day-to-day mediation. I note with satisfaction that, since their establishment, these two organs have played an important role in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.

61. The IWG already held seven meetings. During its first meeting on 8 November 2005, the Group set up its internal organisation and discussed its role as guarantor and impartial arbitrator of the peace and reconciliation process in Côte d'Ivoire. It recalled the provisions of resolution 1633 (2005) on the powers of the Prime Minister to be appointed and pledged to support him/her. It drew up a roadmap with a view to holding free, fair, open and transparent elections, no later than 31 October 2006.

62. At its second meeting on 6 December 2005, the IWG expressed its gratitude to the Chairperson of the African Union, the current Chairman of ECOWAS and the AU Mediator, for the appointment of Charles Konan Banny as Prime Minister. The Group addressed the issue of the end of the mandate of the National Assembly on 16 December 2005 and the paralysis of the IEC. It recalled the individual measures provided for in paragraphs 9 and 11 of resolution 1572 (2004). The Group strongly urged the Ivorian media to refrain from any publication, radio or television broadcast which could undermine the peace and reconciliation process. The Group released the matrix of the roadmap relating to the holding of elections no later than 31 October 2006.

63. At its third meeting held on 15 January 2006, the IWG congratulated the Prime Minister for the formation of the new Government and pledged him its total support. The Group arrived at the conclusion that there was no need to extend the mandate of the National Assembly, which had expired on 16 December 2005. It recommended that the Prime Minister should, in consultation with the Head of State, entrust specific duties to members of Parliament in order to promote peace and national reconciliation. The Group condemned the serious incidents that occurred in the Akouédo military camps, as well as the ensuing persistent violations of human rights affecting innocent civilian populations and foreign nationals. It registered its deep concern at the fiery tone used by some political and media actors. The Group recommended to the Security Council of the United Nations to re-examine the level of UNOCI military and police strengths in accordance with paragraph 22 of resolution 1633 (2005).

64. At its fourth meeting held on 17 February 2006, the IWG welcomed the Prime Minister's spirit of openness, which encourages dialogue with all the national stakeholders, and welcomed the collaboration between the Head of State and the Prime Minister. It requested all the Ivorian parties to embark, as soon as possible, on the disarmament and population identification processes. It urged the Ivorian parties, particularly the media, which through their persistent incitement to hatred constitute a hindrance to the peace and reconciliation process, to abstain from such acts. The Group condemned the violent acts of January 2006, which also affected United Nations and humanitarian organizations personnel and property. It deplored the loss in human lives. Regarding the National Assembly, the Group upheld the UN Secretary-General's statement of 29 January 2006, which underscored the need to avoid any unilateral action. The Group requested the Prime Minister to take all appropriate security measures to enable the RTI to discharge its duties. The Group endorsed the arbitration of the High Representative for the Elections as contained in his press release of 16 February 2006. According to the release, the election of the IEC Bureau complies with the spirit of the Pretoria Agreement. The Group also endorsed the recommendation to the Head of State, the Prime Minister and political parties to arrive at a political agreement to enable the IEC to function smoothly.

65. At its fifth meeting held on 17 March 2006, the IWG congratulated the Prime Minister on the initiatives he took, in consultation with the Head of State, with a view to creating a confidence-building atmosphere for speeding up the implementation of the roadmap. It congratulated the Ivorian political leaders for the meeting held in Yamoussoukro on 28 February 2006, and welcomed the new spirit of dialogue taking root within the Ivorian political class. The Group expressed its satisfaction with the effective election of the IEC Bureau. It congratulated and thanked Mr. Antonio Monteiro, High Representative for the Elections, at the end of his mission, and requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations to designate his successor. The Group underscored the urgent need to facilitate the redeployment, as soon as possible, of UNOCI forces in the Western part of the country to enable them pursue their peace and security missions, in accordance with the Security Council mandate. The Group condemned the persistent violations of human rights, in particular the attacks against Ministers. The Group appealed to potential donors to provide assistance to the Government, particularly with respect to the DDR, the identification process, the elections and the rehabilitation of RTI infrastructure.

66. At its sixth meeting held on 20 April 2006, while highlighting the progress achieved, the IWG expressed its deep concern regarding the delays in the commencement of the activities essential to the effective implementation of the roadmap. The Group underlined that, midway through the process, time was running out, and expressed concern about the consequences that could arise from any further blockages if deadlines were not met. The Group recalled that the main Ivorian political leaders had agreed, at their 8 April 2006 meeting under the auspices of President Denis Sassou-Nguesso, Chairperson of the African Union, on the simultaneous and immediate implementation of the disarmament and identification processes, and thus requested the Government to take all the necessary measures for this purpose. The Group expressed concern about the suspension of dialogue between the Chiefs of Staff of the FDSCI and FAFN, and strongly urged them to restore the conditions necessary for its smooth continuation with a view to ensuring the effective commencement of the DDR process and the dismantling of the militias, without further delay. The Group welcomed Mr. Gerard Stoudman in his capacity as the new High Representative for the Elections in Côte d'Ivoire.

67. The IWG held its seventh meeting on 19 May 2006. On this occasion, the Group welcomed the launching of pilot projects of public hearings in seven locations, as well as the arrangements currently being made by the Chiefs of Staff in order to start the pre-assembly of combatants. At the same time, the Group expressed its deep concern at the delays in the fulfilment of many of the essential tasks scheduled in the roadmap. The Group urged all the Ivorian parties to continue to closely cooperate with the Government with a view to ensuring that the identification and DDR processes are extended to the entire territory immediately after the completion of the pilot project of public hearings and pre-assembly of combatants.

68. The Group expressed its serious concern over the persistence of the culture of impunity and the heightened incitement to hatred and violence. In this regard, it firmly condemned the acts of violence against the population, political leaders and impartial forces, as well as the systematic denigration to which representatives of the international community are subjected by certain media and political personalities. The Group issued a solemn warning to all those who, directly or indirectly, obstruct the implementation of the roadmap. It invited the Sanctions Committee of the Security Council to take appropriate measures against them.

69. The Mediation Group oversees the day-to-day mediation. The Mediation Group holds regular meetings and maintains close contact with Ivorian political and civil society stakeholders, in order not only to be abreast with the situation, but also to suggest actions that could be taken to bring the crisis to an end. It prepares IWG meetings, notably by submitting to it reports on the situation prevailing in the country, along with recommendations. Finally, it monitors the implementation of recommendations adopted by the IWG.

IX. ROLE OF THE AFRICAN UNION

70. The decision of the 40th meeting of the PSC gives to the AU a central role in its implementation, particularly with regard to the appointment of the Prime Minister, as well as the composition of the IWG and the Mediation Group. In this respect, Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Denis Sassou-Nguesso, in their capacities as successive Chairpersons of the AU, and President Thabo Mbeki, AU Mediator,

played a prominent role. They should be credited with the appointment of Charles Konan Banny to the post of Prime Minister and the cessation of violence in January 2006, as well as the consensus reached among the five main Ivorian political leaders, for the simultaneous implementation of the disarmament and identification operations. For my part, in the period preceding the formation of the Government, I paid a visit to Abidjan on 27 December 2005. During the visit, I held talks with President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny.

71. The AU actively participates in IWG deliberations. The Commissioner for Peace and Security thus attended several IWG meetings. Each time, he underscored the need for rapid progress in order to carry the peace process through within the PSC and Security Council prescribed timeframes.

72. As a member of the IWG Secretariat and the Mediation Group, the AU Liaison Office in Côte d'Ivoire actively participates in the work of these two organs. In this framework, my Special Representative, Ambroise Niyonsaba, holds regular meetings with Ivorian leaders, representatives of political parties, civil society organizations, and representatives of countries or organizations involved in the peace process. Similarly, the Special Representative and/or his aids participates in the Ivorian parties consultations concerning the end of the term of office of the National Assembly as well as the organization of the Forum for National Dialogue, in meetings with press regulation bodies, editors-in-chief of the written press, RTI officials, the economic forum organized by the Prime Minister, several meetings devoted to DDR, and meetings organized by the High Representative for the Elections to assist the structures overseeing the electoral process coordinate their actions. The Office regularly takes part in discussions organized in Abidjan and in other parts of the country by human rights or development associations, during which it upholds the principles of dialogue and tolerance. Furthermore, arrangements are being made to strengthen the Liaison Office, by deploying an expert on elections.

73. The Liaison Office, through its military component, also monitors military activities and relations between the Impartial Forces, the FDSCI and FAFN. In addition, it works in close collaboration with the Impartial Forces during regular meetings to monitor the overall security situation. The military component also undertakes field missions and establishes contact with local military authorities, as was the case on 10 December 2005, at Guiglo, and, on 8 March, at Yamoussoukro.

74. The Office closely monitors the humanitarian situation and the respect of human rights, especially in sensitive areas; its targets include vulnerable populations, displaced persons, refugees, women, children, the aged and disabled persons. The Office thus regularly takes part in coordination meetings organized by humanitarian organizations. It further attends the UNOCI weekly consultations on the protection of civilian populations and the promotion of the rule of law as well as other forums or workshops relating to this topic, especially the forum organized by UNOCI during the celebration marking the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 2005, and the workshop organized at Yamoussoukro on the role of women in times of conflict during the celebration of International Women's Day, on 8 March 2006.

X. OBSERVATIONS

75. The latent difficulties that gave rise to the events witnessed in Abidjan and the western part of the country, in January, have revealed the serious threats facing the peace process. However, the Prime Minister's efforts have enabled significant progress. They have given rise to a new spirit of dialogue and compromise, ushered in a political climate of peace and opened the prospect for internal mediation spurred by Ivorians themselves. In this respect, the Prime Minister's initiative to organize a mini-summit in Yamoussoukro on 28 February 2006 marked a turning point in the peace process. In form, it was the first time the main Ivorian political leaders were meeting together without the help of external mediation. In substance, the results achieved there from provide answers to hanging questions. This spirit needs to be encouraged and sustained since it had created conducive conditions for the implementation of the roadmap.

76. There are however a number of unresolved challenges, notably the effective implementation of the DDR programme, the disarmament and dismantling of the militias, the identification process, which is prerequisite for the establishment of voters' lists, as well as the redeployment of the administration throughout the national territory, and the restoration of State authority. In this respect, all must be done to iron out the controversy surrounding the sequencing of the disarmament and the identification processes. The PSC should urge the Ivorian parties to consolidate the consensus reached on these issues. Here, tribute is due to Presidents Olusegun Obasanjo and Denis Sassou-Nguesso, respectively former and current Chairpersons of the African Union, and also President Thabo Mbeki, AU Mediator, for their active role in promoting peace in Côte d'Ivoire.

77. At the same time, the PSC should appeal to the sense of responsibility of the Ivorian parties, particularly their mandatory duty to fully implement the roadmap so that the elections can be held within the prescribed timeframe. In this regard, the PSC should send a strong warning to the Ivorian parties, for any further delay in the current arrangements would have untold consequences. Similarly, the PSC should encourage the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister to continue to work in close collaboration to implement the roadmap and bring the peace process to a successful conclusion within the prescribed timeframe.

78. As far as the obstacles witnessed in western Cote d'Ivoire following the events of January 2006 are concerned, the PSC should urge the Ivorian authorities and all the parties involved to take all the necessary measures to guarantee the freedom of movement and operation of the UNOCI, the Licorne force and of humanitarian bodies and non-governmental organizations throughout the country.

79. The PSC should reaffirm its support to the IWG and the Mediation Group and encourage them to pursue their efforts and support to the Government and all the institutions involved in the peace process. The PSC should also express its support to the solemn warning issued by the IWG, during its 7th meeting on 19 May 2006, to all those directly or indirectly obstructing or intending to obstruct the implementation of the roadmap, as well as to the appeal to the Sanctions Committee of the Security Council to take appropriate measures against those concerned.

80. The events that occurred last January revealed the magnitude of the challenges facing UNOCI. Although its reinforcement by MINUL troops, authorized on a temporary basis by the Security Council in February, has enhanced its capacity, this does not guarantee its ability to face up to any possible threats or the challenges of securing the smooth conduct of the electoral process. The PSC should give priority to this issue and reiterate its request to the Security Council to strengthen the capacities and means of UNOCI and give a favourable and early response to the proposals made by the Secretary-General, last January.

81. Finally, I would like to underscore the need for continued cooperation between the AU, leaders of the region, ECOWAS and the United Nations. This cooperation is vital for the conclusion of the peace process within the prescribed timeframes. Also crucial is the financial and technical support needed from the international community to implement the roadmap.

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