

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 21 December 2015 from the Secretary-General
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

I refer to my letter dated 9 December 2014 ([S/2014/893](#)) informing the President of the Security Council of the progress made by the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission, and to his reply dated 12 December 2014 ([S/2014/894](#)), in which he took note of my intention to continue the activities of the United Nations support team to the Mixed Commission, with funding from the regular budget. By the present letter, I would like to inform you of the latest achievements and activities of the Mixed Commission.

As you know, the United Nations established the Mixed Commission to facilitate the implementation of the judgment of the International Court of Justice of 10 October 2002 on the Cameroon-Nigeria boundary and territorial dispute. The mandate of the Mixed Commission includes supporting the demarcation of the land boundary and delineation of the maritime boundary, facilitating the withdrawal and transfer of authority, addressing the situation of affected populations, and making recommendations on confidence-building measures.

Achievements to date include the withdrawal of Nigeria and transfer of authority to Cameroon in the Lake Chad area (December 2003), along the land boundary (July 2004) and in the Bakassi Peninsula (a process which began in June 2006 and was completed in August 2008); the delineation of the maritime boundary (May 2007); and the end of the special transitional regime of five years, established under the Greentree Agreement in June 2006, and the exercise by Cameroon of full rights of sovereignty over the Bakassi zone (August 2013). The Mixed Commission also approved all of the recommendations of the Working Group on the Maritime Boundary, including the provisions for cross-border cooperation on hydrocarbon deposits straddling the maritime boundary (March 2011).

In 2015, the Mixed Commission continued to facilitate the process, including by helping to maintain dialogue and communication between the two countries. However, the deteriorating security situation impeded the conduct of field visits, given that the three border States of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe in north-eastern Nigeria have been under a state of emergency as a result of the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. The demarcation process was further slowed down by the general elections in Nigeria in 2015.

Despite the commitment made by the heads of delegation of Cameroon and Nigeria on 11 October 2014 in Yaoundé to complete the remaining tasks in cartographic demarcation with an in-office cartographic methodology that dispenses



with the need for field missions in the north and in areas affected by Boko Haram, the parties have been unable to assess and agree on the remaining areas along the land boundary. Consequently, a final working session initially scheduled for November 2015 has been postponed until the first quarter of 2016. In that regard, the newly inaugurated Government in Nigeria has expressed its intention to renew its efforts to resolve the outstanding issues.

The heads of delegation of Cameroon and Nigeria have expressed confidence that the remaining assessment tasks can be completed without dispatching additional field missions to the boundary, as the technical teams have acquired consistent and reliable knowledge of geographical and demographical data deemed sufficient to complete their work. To date, the parties have agreed on the demarcation of 2,001 kilometres of an estimated total of 2,100 kilometres of land boundary. In November 2015, the United Nations support team held bilateral meetings and working sessions with the Cameroonian delegation to record and confirm toponyms for the final mapping. A similar exercise will be undertaken with the Nigerian delegation once the leadership of its National Boundary Commission has been confirmed.

Meanwhile, the construction and emplacement of pillars to physically mark the land boundary has continued. Of the estimated 2,696 boundary pillars that will be required, a total of 665 have already been successfully constructed. In line with the Mixed Commission's completion strategy for the period 2015-2017, the construction and emplacement of an additional 231 pillars in lot 3, located in the central area of the land border, commenced in October 2015 and is currently ongoing. The construction is expected to be completed by April 2016. This will bring the total number of pillars constructed to 896, to be followed by an additional 469 pillars by the end of 2016. During the meeting of the heads of delegation in Yaoundé in October 2014, the parties formally expressed their willingness to make additional, individual contributions of resources towards the construction of the remaining 1,800 boundary pillars required for the pillar emplacement project under the trust fund, and also agreed to call on international donors for renewed assistance. Additional fundraising initiatives, through my Special Representative for West Africa and Chair of the Mixed Commission, will also be required.

Supplementary resources are also required to implement joint cross-border programmes in support of the populations affected by the demarcation. This includes funding for quick-impact projects for confidence-building among communities, with a particular focus on women and youth. During the period between the general elections in Nigeria in March 2015 and the inauguration of the new Government in November 2015, the United Nations support team to the Mixed Commission worked with the United Nations country team in Nigeria to relaunch confidence-building initiatives.

These initiatives have since been endorsed by the United Nations country team for incorporation into the country programme, where applicable. In addition, the United Nations support team is in the process of implementing a framework to coordinate with the United Nations country team in Nigeria to carry out feasibility studies and determine cost estimates for six sectoral projects.

In Cameroon, projects focused on food security and microcredit, access to drinking water, green energy, capacity-building for women and youth for employment and the protection of civilians in Bakassi and in the Far North region

have been updated at the request of the Government of Cameroon to reflect demographic changes brought about by the terrorist activities of Boko Haram. The Chair of the Mixed Commission will seek extrabudgetary resources to implement the confidence-building projects consistent with the revised United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks of both countries.

The drafting committee, which was established in February 2014 to prepare the land and maritime boundary statement, has held two meetings with the active support of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat. The United Nations technical team of the Mixed Commission is also working with the support of the Geospatial Information Section to produce maps to be annexed to the boundary statement.

Overall, it is expected that the field assessment of the areas of the boundary not yet agreed would be completed by the end of 2016, depending on the commitment of the parties to their joint undertaking. Regarding the settlement of the outstanding areas to be agreed, most, if not all, could be resolved during the same working session if the parties demonstrate flexibility and adhere to compromise solutions. This, in turn, would allow the finalization of the demarcation process, the final maps and the pillar emplacement operations by the end of 2017. Through the good offices of my Special Representative for West Africa, in his capacity as Chair of the Mixed Commission, the Presidents of Cameroon and Nigeria pledged in July 2015 their commitment to complete the demarcation of their joint border. The completion of the bulk of the demarcation work is dependent on the willingness of the two parties to reach an agreement on all outstanding issues.

After 31 December 2015, the following activities are required in order to conclude the work of the Mixed Commission:

- (a) Agreement on the remaining outstanding areas using in-office evaluation and demarcation methodology;
- (b) Production of the final maps and the boundary statement;
- (c) Facilitation of the construction and emplacement of boundary pillars, financed by the trust fund for the demarcation activities;
- (d) Promotion of cross-border cooperation, including maritime cooperation, and coordinated security monitoring along the land boundary;
- (e) Finalization of confidence-building initiatives for local communities affected by the demarcation;
- (f) Implementation of the completion strategy for the period 2015-2017 by progressively handing over the activities of the Mixed Commission to the Joint Bilateral Commission and other subregional structures.

I would like to recall that, until 2003, the Mixed Commission was funded entirely from extrabudgetary funds. Thereafter, from 2004 to 2015, the activities of the Mixed Commission were funded through the United Nations regular budget. The Governments of Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Italy, Norway, Pakistan, Sweden and Uruguay have provided in-kind contributions for the substantive and technical work of the Commission (military and legal experts), in addition to the logistical support provided by the Governments of Cameroon and Nigeria, and the voluntary contributions of both countries, as well as those of Canada, the United

Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union, to the trust fund for the demarcation activities.

As has been the case in recent years, and given the cost-effectiveness of the operation and the important tasks remaining at this juncture to help advance the peaceful implementation of the judgment of the International Court of Justice, it is my intention to ask for resources from the regular budget for the Mixed Commission for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) **BAN** Ki-moon
