



Security Council

Fifty-fourth Year

4083rd Meeting

Thursday, 16 December 1999, 10.15 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Hain	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Petrella
	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Fonseca
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangué Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Bernard Miyet, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Miyet to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting the Council will hear a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on the situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I now give the floor to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Bernard Miyet.

Mr. Miyet: I will start my presentation with the military and security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The military and security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has seriously deteriorated since the Security Council was last briefed, on 18 November. A Democratic Republic of the Congo Government offensive launched from Mbandaka against territory controlled by the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC) in Equateur province has triggered an MLC counter-attack. On 2 December, MLC forces seized Basankusu, and fighting in the area appears to be continuing. The MLC has accused the Government of bombarding Makanza and Libanda with mortar fire and launching airborne attacks on Basankusu on 2, 3, 5 and 9 December. The MLC also alleges that the Government has concentrated a brigade in Lulonga with the aim of recapturing Basankusu.

At the same time, a group of about 700 Democratic Republic of the Congo-allied forces composed of Congolese, Zimbabwean and Namibian troops has been encircled at Ikela by the rebels and their allies and is running short of supplies. Agreement has been reached between the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) (Goma) and the Zimbabwean forces that if military activity aimed at relieving the encirclement ceased and troops withdrew towards Boende, the RCD (Goma) would then allow forces present in Ikela to be resupplied with non-lethal supplies, to be verified by the Joint Military Commission (JMC). The United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is working closely with the JMC on the implementation of this agreement.

Other clashes have taken place in the south-east of the country, and fears have arisen of a major attack on Bukavu and Uvira by the so-called negative forces which are not party to the Ceasefire Agreement. These include the former Rwandan Government forces and Interahamwe militia, as well as Burundi extremists.

As far as the deployment of United Nations personnel is concerned, on 11 December, Mr. Kamel Morjane of Tunisia, the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, arrived in Kinshasa to assume his functions. Mr. Morjane met with President Kabila and the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as well as with the United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Mr. Richard Holbrooke, during the latter's visit, and I am pleased to see him back here among us.

MONUC has currently deployed 62 of the 90 military liaison officers authorized under Security Council resolution 1258 (1999), of 6 August 1999. In addition to Kinshasa, the site of the United Nations advance military headquarters, they are located in the capitals of the belligerent States, in Addis Ababa and in Bujumbura.

Teams of military liaison officers have also been deployed in Goma, Kananga and Gbadolite following visits made to those locations by the technical survey team tasked with preparing for further deployments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and another deployment to Kindu is scheduled to take place this week. However, the RCD has yet to agree to the planned positioning of another team in Kisangani, insisting that the Government should first allow more MONUC deployments in the area they control.

Until MONUC is guaranteed the full security and freedom of movement it needs by both sides, it will not be able to complete its technical survey of the country or to station military liaison officers at the rear military headquarters of the parties, as stipulated by the Council. Until we have the information we need from the survey and from the military headquarters of the belligerents, we will not be in a position fully to assess the conditions of security, access and freedom of movement and cooperation on the part of the parties, or to develop a detailed and comprehensive concept of operations to submit to the Council, as called for in resolution 1279 (1999).

MONUC has also been assisting the JMC by deploying some of the regional joint military commissions, which have now been positioned in Lisala, Boende and Kabinda. Another team is scheduled to be placed in Kabalo. The regional joint military commissions are accompanied by teams of military observers of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

In order to complete its survey of the country and the deployment of the remaining military liaison officers, MONUC — together with the JMC — has drawn up a jointly agreed list of locations that includes the rear military headquarters of the parties, as stipulated in resolution 1258 (1999). The JMC, in accordance with the role established for it in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, will be responsible, in conjunction with MONUC, for obtaining the consent of the parties for these deployments.

(spoke in French)

I would now like to take up the conclusions of the meeting of the Joint Military Commission.

At its third session, which was held during the first week of December at Harare, the JMC took up the reports of four working groups — on the disengagement of forces, humanitarian assistance, disarmament and the withdrawal of forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The JMC also agreed that the Zambian Government would have the task of leading a mediation group comprised of representatives from MONUC, the OAU, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the RCD (Goma) to broker an agreement on the disengagement of forces around Ikela, as I previously indicated.

The next meeting of the JMC is scheduled to take place on 20 January 2000. In the meantime, the MONUC JMC support team will participate and assist in the

establishment of a 24-hour JMC secretariat and operations room in Lusaka.

On 15 December 1999, the Secretary-General of the OAU, Mr. Salim Salim, announced that the representatives of the Government of Democratic Republic of the Congo and the three rebel groups, meeting in Addis Ababa, had agreed that the former President of the Republic of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire, should assume the role of the neutral facilitator for the inter-Congolese political negotiations. Mr. Salim said he would consult with the President of Botswana, Mr. Festus Mogae, and with Sir Ketumile, and that he remained confident that with this nomination it would be possible to meet the challenges confronting the country.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, heavy rains have caused numerous flooding problems in Kinshasa over the past two weeks. Twenty thousand persons are currently without shelter. A crisis committee headed by the Minister of Health is addressing immediate humanitarian needs. The threat of possible cholera outbreaks is currently being monitored by local authorities.

This situation has also resulted in food shortages in urban areas. The prices of some food staples have risen by more than 25 per cent in recent weeks. This has been made considerably worse by Government-imposed currency exchange controls, which have impeded imports, particularly the import of foodstuffs. In addition, the supply of foodstuffs has also been seriously affected in recent weeks by rebel activity in food-producing areas, a situation that has been compounded by the start of the rainy season. Humanitarian agencies themselves are currently having difficulties, particularly as a result of the effect of the currency control regime on their operating costs.

There has been an increase in the level of chronic malnutrition in the districts of Bas-Congo, in the west of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in particular among children under the age of five years. The World Food Programme has announced that while access to war-affected populations has improved, humanitarian agencies still have difficulty in reaching the interior of the country. It has also stated that unless new funds are made available immediately, 350,000 people already living under very precarious conditions will have to struggle even more to survive.

With regard to the next stages, in resolution 1279 (1999) the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to report to it as soon as possible on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to submit his recommendations on further deployment of United Nations personnel in the country and on their protection. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to take the administrative steps necessary for the equipping of up to 500 United Nations military observers, with a view to facilitating future rapid United Nations deployments as authorized by the Council.

In view of the difficulties we have faced — as I have said here — in gathering the necessary information to present a concept of operations, we are not at this point in a position to submit recommendations to the Security Council. We intend to submit a further report on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in mid-January, which, we anticipate, will contain options and recommendations based on the situation as at that time.

Let me remind members that thanks to the resolution adopted by the Security Council, the necessary administrative measures have already been taken to facilitate the future equipping of these 500 military observers.

In the meantime, action must be taken to check and reverse the degradation of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Naturally, it is the parties themselves who bear the primary responsibility for taking this action. The recent agreement on the nomination of Sir Ketumile Masire of Botswana is to be welcomed. An early start to the national dialogue would be an important step towards the resolution of the conflict.

The Government and the parties should also reaffirm their full cooperation with MONUC in its efforts to implement the resolutions adopted by the Security Council. In this context, we believe that very strict adherence to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement is essential.

The success of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic in supporting the stability of the Central African Republic has given us a clear and positive indication of the role the United Nations can play in the creation and maintenance of conditions of security and stability in that country. It is our hope that action by the United Nations can have the same positive effect in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and thus contribute to a general improvement in regional stability and cooperation.

The President: I thank Mr. Miyet for his comprehensive briefing.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): I wish to thank Mr. Miyet for his excellent opening statement. As he mentioned, I am just back from Africa, and I would like to reply based on what I observed, building on our excellent meeting of yesterday. I would like to try to observe yesterday's five-minute rule again and reserve the right to talk again later, because I believe that the most valuable conversation we could have this morning would be a real exchange of views on an issue which I believe will be as important for the future of the United Nations next year as Kosovo and East Timor were this year. I might add, based on considerable personal experience in Kosovo and East Timor, this one will be more complicated by far than East Timor and no less complicated than Kosovo.

With that as an opening remark, let me compliment Mr. Miyet on his briefing and address the concerns of many of my colleagues here in the Security Council on this issue.

In our trip, we were accompanied by Senator Feingold, the ranking Democrat on African affairs in the United States Senate. I mention that because, as members are aware, under our system of Government it is Congress that pays the bills, and under our system of Government we will need to have their approval for American contributions to any peacekeeping efforts. We have achieved that in Kosovo and East Timor with difficulty, and in Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic. We look forward to getting congressional approval next year for an action in the Congo.

But it is important, as I have said repeatedly, to get it right. We cannot repeat the tragedies of Bosnia, Somalia and Rwanda. In that sense, I strongly endorse the Under-Secretary-General's emphasis on Lusaka. Having been involved in a few peacekeeping negotiations myself and observed many others, I can say that the Lusaka Agreement is a really superb agreement. It is well-written and well-thought-out, and, most importantly, it was done by the parties themselves, under their own leadership in the region. This is a lot more than I can say for Bosnia or East Timor.

Having said that, I think we need to recognize that this agreement is being widely disregarded or even violated, and we are delighted at the nomination of President Masire as the facilitator. This was one of the

main efforts that I engaged in during my trip, and it is very gratifying that he has been offered the job. We deeply and profoundly hope that he will accept it and that movement in that direction will be rapid.

As I said in my speech in Pretoria, the United States would find it difficult to move forward in support of peacekeeping absent a facilitator to work on the political component, which is so critical.

On the Joint Military Commission (JMC), I want to state again that during our trip last week, we delivered \$1 million to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for the Joint Military Commission and had extended talks with General Lallali, who is in charge of that effort. We would like to repeat what was said so often yesterday — that the JMC, the OAU, the United Nations and MONUC must work more closely together.

The United States has been occasionally charged in recent days with dragging its feet on peacekeeping in the Congo. Let me state again, as I did quite openly to my friends here in the Security Council and to the leaders of the African States which I visited — and I spoke to every person who signed the Lusaka Agreement — that the statement that the United States is dragging its feet is true. We are dragging our feet right now, but not because we are opposed to peacekeeping in Congo. We are dragging our feet because we want a peacekeeping operation, and we want to get it right. We cannot afford an operation which is not right, and there are many things to sort out here.

The Under-Secretary-General a moment ago said he could not yet give us precision on the composition and structure of the peacekeeping force. We really need to know that, and with all due respect, I believe it is imperative that we have a more intense planning effort involving the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the nations on the Security Council and other potential major troop contributors, and other countries that will be asked to contribute money. This is very complicated — much, much more complicated than Timor or even Kosovo, and once we start down this path, the relationship between the JMC and MONUC, or its successor, the relationship between the OAU and the United Nations, the command and control situation on the ground, the mandate, the size, the costs, the backup all need to be known. We should not vote a resolution until we know what we are voting for.

If members will bear with me a moment, I can assure them that such an approach — and this will be our major emphasis in January during the American presidency of the

Security Council — will better enable us to gain international support for this process, domestic support in our own countries, and, in my particular case, support from the Congress of the United States.

I might add in that regard, and I can tell members this morning what many of them have already heard informally, that during the month of January we will be visited in New York for the first time ever by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, led by Senator Helms and Senator Biden. They will come to New York, they will hold meetings and hearings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee here in New York for the first time in history, and they will ask permission to come and visit with Council members individually and collectively. And because this issue — the Democratic Republic of the Congo — will be so high on the agenda, it will be a natural focus. So we have an opportunity to work together in the next six weeks on this critical issue.

I also want to mention the Southern African Development Community, which is playing a vitally important role; I did not mean to neglect it. But the organizational arrangements must be clearly worked out. I would like to reserve the opportunity to respond in more detail as this debate continues.

I am delighted that you, Mr. President, are still here, and that you have spent two full days with us. I hope that your schedule will permit you to rejoin us in January. Your personal involvement and leadership, together with that of Ambassador Greenstock, has been a signal contribution to the placing of an absolutely essential emphasis on Africa and on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which this Organization is obligated to do.

The President: I will certainly allow interventions later on, provided that everybody ensures that I have the time to do so.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Miyet and Ambassador Holbrooke for their statements. I wish to join Ambassador Holbrooke in reserving the right to intervene again later in the debate, in conformity with the interactive format that the British presidency has so fortunately introduced.

In yesterday's open debate on Africa, almost all delegations spoke about the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Some delegations, such as that of South Africa, spoke about nothing else. Clearly, the overlapping theme of these two days of public Council debate is the

implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, not by its signatories, but by the Security Council. If the Security Council fails to pass this litmus test, so we were told, it will once again have revealed its double standard. Yesterday, my delegation had hoped to put up some feeble defence against these strident words, but unfortunately there was no time for second statements. Today we are less pressed for time, so I may be allowed to use my turn in this debate to say a few words about this matter.

There appear to be two very different ways of looking at the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The first is to be baffled by the complexity of the conflict. Here we have a country with — even by African standards — has an exceptionally contorted past, from being the personal possession of Leopold II through decades of mismanagement under President Mobutu. Given that history, one can hardly be surprised that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is in such disarray today.

The second way of looking at the Democratic Republic of the Congo is to see a simple line of cause and effect between the Rwandan genocide and the present chaos in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Those delegations in the Council that blame other delegations for dragging their feet tend to see it that way. For them, the situation is not complex, but simple; and for simple situations, they have simple remedies: all the Council has to do is to comply with the Lusaka Agreement and send in the troops.

My delegation does not believe in the second approach. We are unable to regard the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as simple. It is true that many people in the eastern part of the country have no business being there, but these intruders form an inextricable mix of friends and enemies of the Government of Rwanda. The drafters of the Lusaka Agreement were aware of that: precisely because of the complexity of the situation, the Lusaka Agreement may well be the only viable solution. We agree with Ambassador Holbrooke that the Lusaka Agreement is a well-drafted accord, but we have also heard him say that just about every one of its provisions is being ignored or violated.

This is nothing new. On the first day that the Security Council discussed the Lusaka Agreement, we were already put under pressure with the argument that the Agreement would not last if we did not dispatch our peacekeepers right away. I vividly remember that day, because I expressed my doubt about the appropriateness of the qualification,

“significant milestone”, for an agreement that none of the rebels had yet been prepared to sign.

If the Lusaka Agreement is a litmus test, it is, first of all, one for the people who signed it. If the parties themselves do not fulfil their engagements, there is nothing the Council can do. In that sense, there was something disconcerting about yesterday’s debate. What we witnessed in this Chamber was the emergence of the myth that it was the dilly-dallying of the Security Council that killed the Lusaka Agreement. We are not there yet. There is still hope, and we can proceed on the basis of a new resolution. But the Council has been given a stern warning. If my delegation had been given the floor a second time yesterday, we would have begged the African delegations not to delude themselves. Does anyone seriously believe that the Lusaka Agreement was being observed by all parties for the first three months of its existence, and only then began to unravel due to the Council’s inaction?

As a representative of the Netherlands, I feel entitled to ask such questions. The Netherlands is anxious to do the right thing with regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but it is not helpful if we are told that the situation is simple, and that considering it to be complex can only be a lame excuse for procrastination. That is not the sort of approach that helps us overcome our hesitation. Speaking for the Netherlands, I can only say that our commitment to Africa cannot be called into question. I do not want to waste the Council’s time, but let me briefly repeat what I said yesterday. The Netherlands is spending large sums of money on Kosovo, but our significant total contribution to Africa has not been affected. Moreover, there has been no slackening in our commitment to African projects that are of special concern to the Security Council, such as our contributions to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Sierra Leone and to the Arusha process in Burundi. There has not been any diversion in the flow of Dutch funds destined for Africa.

We feel that a country with our record should be seriously listened to when it tries to explain why it has certain doubts about a military involvement that is urged upon the Security Council. We are not procrastinating when we ask normal questions. In addition, however, there is a second reason why the Netherlands feels justified in being cautious, and that is its traumatic involvement in the tragedy of Srebrenica. The Secretary-General’s report on Srebrenica of 15 November contains

a gruesome account of what can go wrong if military involvement is initiated without having been thought through, if peacekeeping operations are used as a substitute for political consensus and peacekeepers are told that they must use their peacekeeping tools to impose the ill-defined wishes of the international community on one or another of the belligerents by military means.

Let us not make that mistake twice.

The President: The Security Council may wish to know that I hope to conclude the debate by 12.25 p.m., because I have an appointment with the Secretary-General. But obviously we would like to have a full interactive discussion if possible.

Mr. Jagne (Gambia): My delegation would like to thank you and your delegation once again, Mr. President, for organizing this important meeting of the Security Council. The meeting on partnership with Africa, held yesterday under your presidency, was clear testimony of your Government's commitment to peace and stability in Africa. We commend you once again for these important initiatives. My delegation is also grateful to Mr. Miyet for his comprehensive briefing.

My delegation eagerly awaits the report of the technical survey team and the report of the Secretary-General on the future of United Nations deployments to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is a pity, though, that the technical survey team has been experiencing some difficulties in carrying out its tasks; consequently, the Secretariat cannot, for now, submit its recommendations. We hope that the team will very soon be allowed to continue its work. We note with satisfaction, however, that the Secretariat has taken the administrative measures to deploy the 500 military observers in due course.

My delegation is gratified to note that the Joint Military Commission (JMC) established by the parties to the Agreement is up and running. So is the political Committee. This is a good start, and we encourage the parties to continue their work. At this juncture, my delegation would like to place on record its sincere gratitude to the Government of the United States for its generous contribution to the JMC. We understand that those two institutions of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement will require financing if they are to function effectively. We are grateful to all those States that have provided financing or logistical support to the JMC, and we encourage others that can do so to help.

Notwithstanding the fact that the parties have signed a Ceasefire Agreement, the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo still constitutes a cause of grave concern. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to renew its call on all the parties to respect the Ceasefire Agreement and to use the JMC more effectively to deal with allegations of violations of the Ceasefire Agreement. But at the same time, we have to defeat the negative forces, the forces of evil and darkness. We would like to emphasize that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot end without the full commitment and cooperation of all the parties concerned. While we hail them for the good judgement they have demonstrated by signing the Lusaka Agreement, we urge them to show greater political will and commitment to the Lusaka process. There can be no military solution to this fratricidal conflict. The parties should therefore work together in good faith and contribute positively to the smooth implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. That agreement is the most viable one for the restoration of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and must therefore be implemented.

But we need to move fast in order to maintain the momentum that has been generated by the signing of the Agreement. The longer we wait, the more likely the Agreement is to unravel and fighting to resume. As with all fragile peace agreements, the longer one waits to take the necessary action to back the implementation of the agreement, the more likely it is to fall apart. The Lusaka Agreement is no exception. My delegation is of the view that we are taking too long in trying to get it right. It is important that we get it right, but we are taking too long in our planning; we are taking too long to get prepared. The time to act is now.

My delegation appreciates that there are problems which must be addressed by the parties; one example is the appointment of a facilitator. It is our responsibility to remind them of their obligation to solve these problems. Again, we commend the United States Government, and Ambassador Holbrooke in particular, for belling the cat in this regard and for Ambassador Holbrooke's timely visit to the region. We hope that former President Ketumile Masire of Botswana, who has now been identified by the parties as a potential facilitator, will accept that position so that we can move on.

My delegation believes that as we remind the parties of their obligations and of the need for commitment, we should equally remind ourselves of our own obligations and should see to it that we measure up to them. The

Security Council, we hope, will make good on its promises and act expeditiously with a view to deploying a fully fledged peacekeeping mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo when the time is ripe. Half-hearted measures or an unduly delayed response will receive severest criticism from Member State. The horrors of Rwanda are a grim reminder, and must not be allowed to repeat themselves in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Not too long ago, President Chiluba of Zambia participated in a Security Council meeting similar to this one. One of his main contributions to the debate was to note the need for the Security Council to deploy peacekeeping troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as soon as possible. Yesterday, during our debate here on partnership with Africa, the Permanent Representative of South Africa told us that the litmus test of the Security Council's commitment to conflict resolution in Africa is the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It could not have been clearer.

We have seen how conflicts in other parts of the world have been addressed. We are not trying to draw parallels here, but let us face the facts. We are not asking the Council to do the impossible. We have seen resolutions for the deployment of a peacekeeping operation prepared and adopted within as few as two days. To ask for the same treatment might be seen as unrealistic, and we would accept simply that African issues, like all other issues, should be given the urgent, full and proper treatment they deserve. We have said so over and over again in the Council: approach all issues, irrespective of where the conflicts are, with the same zeal, with the same enthusiasm. My delegation has always said in the Council that a life in Angola or the Democratic Republic of the Congo or elsewhere in Africa is no less precious than a life in Kosovo or East Timor or elsewhere in another continent.

Nobody is saying that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is simple: nobody is saying that. All we are saying is that the situation is bad enough and that we should therefore act now to prevent the situation from worsening. That is all we are asking for. We hope we will not be misunderstood.

We need the Council's partnership; we need its support; we need its cooperation. We said this here yesterday, and we said it when we had our lunch together. We have been encouraged by the signs we are seeing in the Council. We have talked to some of our colleagues, other African representatives, who asked us as African members of the Council about the prospects for the Council resolving

conflict situations in Africa. We told them that the trend is positive, and that we are hopeful. The signs are positive.

So, all we are asking of the Council is to make good on its promises. The whole of Africa is watching, and I am sure that the Council will not let us down.

The President: I thank the representative of the Gambia for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Mr. Miyet for his important presentation, and we thank Ambassador Holbrooke for sharing his impressions from his recent trip, which included the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Unfortunately, the news is not very encouraging. Indeed, the ceasefire so laboriously crafted, and signed at Lusaka in July 1999, is violated with ever-greater frequency. And the United Nations technical survey team, responsible for assessing the security and safety situation on the ground with a view to defining the operational concept of a peacekeeping operation, has encountered serious difficulties of access and, as we understand it, will be unable to submit its report before the end of the year.

In our debate yesterday, we spoke of political will. The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is extremely complex and will not be resolved unless all parties concerned evince the political will to find a democratic, non-military resolution of the conflict. That said, we believe that the Security Council can continue to shoulder its responsibilities. Action in a situation such as that of the Democratic Republic of the Congo entails risks. We must also evaluate the risks of a resumption of generalized conflict. In yesterday's debate, we discussed a number of ideas that all deemed useful both for averting conflict and for preventing conflicts from worsening. Perhaps the Council's action could now be guided by some of those ideas.

We are convinced that the United Nations has a major role to play in dealing with this issue, and that its presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be gradually strengthened. The multifunctional presence of the United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is the first step towards that goal. Specifically, it sends a political message of support from the Security Council of support for the Lusaka process. Argentina is prepared to cast a positive eye over the report of the Secretary-General with

a view to the deployment of up to 500 military observers and the establishment of a peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

But a climate of relative security and the granting of appropriate guarantees for the security, access and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated personnel are essential aspects. We realize that it is unrealistic to demand absolute guarantees, but no one is willing to dispatch Blue Helmets into a hostile climate.

As we see it, the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has an external and an internal dimension. The former must take into account the legitimate security concerns of all States involved. At the same time, the solution arrived at must respect the territorial integrity and political independence of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On the other hand, the internal dimension of the conflict cannot be side-stepped. What must be generated is an inclusive political climate open to all Congolese who believe in the values of democracy and a State based upon the rule of law. We must encourage the civil society to move gradually and prudently in the manifestation of its desire for greater participation. Only to the extent that we can make sustained progress on both these fronts, the internal and the external, will it be possible to arrive at a lasting and comprehensive solution. To that end, it is essential to have the firm commitment of all parties to the Lusaka Agreement.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open briefing today on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We would also like to express our appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Miyet for his briefing and updating on the subject. We are pleased that this open briefing, which follows closely the discussion that we had last Friday on the situation in Sierra Leone, is now becoming a regular feature of the work of the Council, demonstrating the increasing transparency of the Council, which is very much welcomed by the larger membership of the Organization.

Yesterday, the Council had a frank and fruitful exchange of views on the situation in Africa as a whole and on how best we could enhance the partnership between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity in efforts to manage or prevent conflicts in Africa. We have noted that in virtually every intervention, particular reference was made to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the importance of the Council's responding promptly and effectively to manage the conflict

there. Indeed, the point was made that the Democratic Republic of the Congo would be the litmus test of the commitment of the Council to be engaged in African conflicts as a whole. Comparisons were made between the Council's hesitancy in responding to conflict situations in Africa, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular, and the promptness of its response to other situations, such as in Kosovo and East Timor. It is time the Council addressed this issue by demonstrating its commitment and resolve to carry out its responsibility vis-à-vis the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We have been reminded time and time again about the fragility of the Lusaka process, which, if not adequately supported by the international community and this Council in particular, might run the real risk of being unravelled. I am afraid that time may not be on our side, and we have been forewarned.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo presents the Organization with one of its most daunting challenges, given the nature and complexity of the conflict there, as well as the country's sheer size. We must therefore be prepared to mount a major peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which could well be the biggest operation undertaken in the history of the Organization thus far. However, for it to be successful, the mission must be provided with all the necessary financial and logistical assistance from the international community. We cannot afford to have a failed mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It is in this connection that my delegation strongly supports early action on the part of the Council to deploy an observer mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as an important step in that direction. Council resolution 1279 (1999) sent a clear political message to the signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement that the Council continues to be fully committed in assisting them in the implementation of the Agreement. More importantly, the resolution should enable the Secretariat to immediately begin preparations in anticipation of a possible deployment of a substantial United Nations observer force in early 2000. In this regard, we look forward to the assessment of the technical survey team, whose recommendations will have an important bearing on any decision regarding the eventual deployment of observers.

In conclusion, Mr. President, my delegation would like to reiterate once again its strong and continued

support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We consider the Lusaka Peace Agreement process critical and crucial for the restoration of peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for the Great Lakes region as a whole. If peace is to take root, all the signatories to the Lusaka Agreement must comply with its provisions. Nothing short of this commitment will suffice. It is in this connection that my delegation notes with concern the recent ceasefire violations in some parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which only serve to further jeopardize the still fragile situation there. We are equally concerned by the serious humanitarian situation precipitated by the ceasefire violations. It is imperative that the parties carry out their responsibilities under the Agreement to help the international community play its role in supporting the peace process effectively.

Malaysia warmly welcomes the decision of the Organization of African Unity to nominate former President Masire of Botswana as the mediator in the Democratic Republic of the Congo crisis. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the recent appointment of Mr. Kamel Morjane as the Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo; he will be serving as the head of the United Nations presence in the subregion and will be assisting in the implementation of the Agreement. We wish him every success.

Mr. Fowler (Canada): I join others, Mr. President, in expressing pleasure at seeing you in the Chair again. I thank you deeply for your interest in the subjects we have been discussing over the last couple of days.

Canada is pleased to note that the Secretary-General's newly appointed Special Representative, Kamel Morjane, has recently arrived in Kinshasa and has taken up his vitally important duties there. We continue to be concerned by the major ceasefire violations by all sides in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Such violations suggest to us that the security conditions required for the deployment of United Nations military observers do not yet exist. We would appreciate the Secretariat's views on how, in the immediate term, short of deploying additional personnel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations can further assist in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement in the face of continuing fighting.

In the last few weeks, there have been two groundbreaking reports produced by the Secretary-General, one of course on Srebrenica a few weeks ago, the other only

yesterday on Rwanda. I would very much agree with Peter van Walsum that both are very much relevant to the discussion we are having today and, indeed, to the discussion we had yesterday. Canada's Roméo Dallaire called desperately from Kigali for Council support in Rwanda to allow him to stop the genocide, and none came. Canadian troops were in the Srebrenica valley for a year before the Dutch troops replaced them, and as Deputy Minister of Defence, I had the nightmare of "What happened to the Dutch?" every day that our troops were in that situation. There are lessons here for us to absorb, and we had better begin coming to terms with those lessons. These are relevant issues, and we must consider them carefully.

Canada joins others in welcoming the Organization of African Unity's appointment of former President Masire as facilitator for the inter-Congolese dialogue. We join Council colleagues in urging all parties to commit themselves to this dialogue so that the process of reconciliation can begin in earnest. There can be no doubt that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo will not be resolved in the absence of a meaningful political dialogue among all Congolese. However, the Security Council should be prepared to further support the Ceasefire Agreement once the parties demonstrate a willingness to abide by their ceasefire commitments. Progress in these two areas — effective internal dialogue and effective ceasefire — will of course be mutually reinforcing.

As the fighting continues, the humanitarian crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo deepens. It is critical that the parties respect their ceasefire agreements and ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian agencies to all areas of the country. Many areas of the country remain utterly inaccessible to humanitarian personnel due to the prevailing conditions of insecurity. All parties to the conflict have an obligation — an immediate obligation — to ensure the safety, security and freedom of movement of humanitarian personnel. They must ensure that safe and unhindered access to all affected populations is provided.

The President: I thank the representative of Canada for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*spoke in French*): I think we have nothing to add to the picture of the situation painted by Mr. Miyet. We know the situation is bleak. There have been ceasefire violations recently. Some time ago a report from the International Committee of the Red

Cross described in very distressing terms the situation prevailing in the north-eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where clashes between tribes over the occupation of land resulted in thousands of people being killed.

So we are more or less silent witnesses to a situation that we all know to be catastrophic, and we all know that it requires a response from the Council — an ongoing response, not just a few resolutions or debates from time to time. It should be a real, concrete effort.

At the same time, we as members of the Security Council, wish to be serious. We know that the decisions we take will be accompanied by risks to observers and to members of a peacekeeping operation. Of course, given this situation, how can one not understand the reaction of those who ask the Council to reflect and recall what has happened in other parts of the world, in Africa as well as in Europe. These past events explain why they, their Governments and their legislatures are asking for more reflection, and why they are calling on us to delve even deeper into all the facts of the situation before taking a decision.

I understand all this full well. I understand the explanations that have been offered in this connection by those representatives who are being accused of foot-dragging. Further, I think that these kinds of explanations, this rationale can also be applied to other situations and other resolutions. Certain countries might legitimately wish that further consideration be given to such other resolutions before they are voted on, given the doubts that one might have about whether they could actually be implemented. All such thinking seems normal to me.

However, we could also ask ourselves what we can do immediately in order to try — I will not say to take up the challenge, but to deal with the immediate dangers in the region, dangers that, I repeat, are leading to losses of human life.

First, we should urge the Secretariat to continue its efforts to produce a concept of operations. This was a point made by Mr. Miyet, and I believe that this is the simplest and most specific issue that we face. An explicit request to the Secretariat from the Council should lead the Secretariat, in conjunction with the Joint Military Commission (JMC) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), to produce a report on a concept of operations that could be implemented in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mr. Miyet spoke about producing such a report in early January,

and I think, given the current schedule, this is a very reasonable time-frame; in the meantime, we eagerly and impatiently await this report from the Secretariat on a concept of operations.

I think that such a report will truly enable the Security Council to shoulder its responsibilities in full knowledge of the facts. I hope the Council will act vigorously, because even if the situation is bleak, there are some encouraging signs. We can be pleased at the decision that was finally taken to appoint a very distinguished, highly respected and wise person — the former President of Botswana — as facilitator. I also think we have to welcome the arrival in Kinshasa of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Morjane, who has an excellent reputation. We hope that he will be able to do some very solid work.

Simple actions might perhaps be taken to contribute to respect for the ceasefire. Given the current situation I would ask Mr. Miyet whether it might not already be possible for the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) to provide some military assistance to the Joint Military Commission by providing it with staff officers to help the Commission do its work.

I also wonder whether the JMC might not be able to provide reports to the Security Council on decisions that the Commission is taking. This relates to one of the requests made yesterday regarding better relations, better cooperation, between the OAU and the United Nations. I think that if the Security Council wants to become actively and genuinely involved in dealing with the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it must have all the available information, so it is entitled to expect the JMC to provide some information, some reports. This would, in fact, respond to the wishes expressed for greater coordination between the regional organizations and the United Nations.

Once again, despite all the references that have been made to the complexity of the situation, I think we have to keep our heads and not lose all optimism. We can take heart in recalling similar situations. Certainly, three or four years ago the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was less disturbing, given that fewer people were involved, but fundamentally the situation was extremely serious. There was a crisis.

France knows something about this, because we played a role in getting the United Nations to deal with

the crisis in the Central African Republic. This was not easy. We came up against a lot of scepticism, a lot of the same reactions we are now hearing as regards the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We were told that we risked becoming involved in a “dubious enterprise”.

Over time, we can see that the operation in Central African Republic was concluded — perhaps not successfully, but at least to our relative satisfaction. In this connection, all the countries that were to finance that operation might examine their consciences to find that they may have been responsible for certain arrears in relation to that operation as well.

And yet, the situation was not simple there. Let us take another example: Sierra Leone. That was not an easy situation. We all know that the Lomé Agreement was not respected. The danger is there, and yet the United Nations agreed to deploy a large peacekeeping operation of some 6,000 men, which proves that, in the final analysis, when we wish to do something, we take the decision to do it.

We hope that, with the actual deployment of that peacekeeping operation, we will be able to correct the situation in Sierra Leone. I say this to indicate that, despite the magnitude and gravity of the crisis, we must not lose hope. Let us remember some happier examples of situations in which the United Nations succeeded in Africa. Let us pin our resolve on the decision we adopted in resolution 1279 (1999) — which we have yet to implement — and on the information — which we hope will be accurate and rigorous — to be provided by the Secretariat in early January along with its concept for the operation.

I conclude by welcoming the programme of work proposed by the future President of the Security Council. It is a good programme and a heavy one that will require great assiduity and presence here on the part of the President. I believe, however, that the stakes are high enough that your example, Sir, will be followed and prove itself convincing.

The President: I thank the representative of France for his mention of setting an example.

Mr. Buallay (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): When the Council discussed yesterday the practical and pragmatic means of confronting African issues and problems, we had hoped to have an interactive dialogue in the form of an open discussion and an exchange of views between the presidency, the members of the Council and the other

Members of the United Nations as a whole. Instead, we merely heard statements and speeches.

Many ideas and proposals were raised yesterday that might have been discussed. Yesterday, too, the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was mentioned several times. Although that demonstrated the importance of this issue, we do not want it to monopolize the Security Council’s attention for a certain period of time, only to be forgotten as just another conflict in Africa. That is no way to remedy the situation.

In this connection, my delegation has two main observations to make. First, after the signing of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, the peace process seems to be progressing rather slowly although the major military battles have long since ceased. What is hindering the restoration of normalcy — including national reconciliation, the withdrawal of foreign forces and the return of refugees — to the Democratic Republic of the Congo? Why has this failed to happen?

Secondly, the United Nations is clearly reluctant to intervene appropriately to resolve this issue. The United Nations must be effectively present on the ground if the peace process is to continue and lasting peace is to be established in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Yet, the current situation — which is one of neither peace nor war — is very dangerous. Should it persist, there is a strong likelihood that peace will fail and that war will break out once again. The conflicting forces remain in position and the combatants remain armed. We foresee that this situation, which remains suspended between heaven and earth, could become semi-permanent with the passage of time. Neighbouring Angola is a case in point.

My question is this. Why does the United Nations hesitate to intervene? We are aware that financial assistance is necessary to fund a United Nations peacekeeping mission, but do we or do we not establish such a mission in all its military and civilian aspects before we enter Kinshasa? Such reluctance will perpetuate the “no war no peace” situation not only in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but also in Angola and Sierra Leone, along the borders between Eritrea and Ethiopia, as well as in Somalia and elsewhere. How long will the African continent — as represented by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other hotbeds of tension — be victimized by the illicit arms trafficking on which it squanders its wealth of diamonds, petroleum and other natural resources? The Democratic Republic of the

Congo actually needs these resources for its social and economic development.

In brief, I have two questions for Mr. Miyet. First, why is the peace process based on the Lusaka agreements so slow? I would stress here that this situation is of great concern to us. Secondly, why is the United Nations so reluctant to engage in the intervention necessary to replace the current precarious peace with a solid lasting one?

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I should like to thank you, Sir, for convening this open briefing on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Our thanks also go to Under-Secretary-General Miyet for his briefing on the subject. We are confident that this meeting will help the Council to find solutions to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Earlier, Ambassador Holbrooke briefed the Council on his trip to Africa. We welcome that trip, including his meetings with the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Physical visits to the areas of conflict in Africa have enabled us not only to empathize more keenly with the sufferings and desires of the war-torn peoples on the ground, but also to collect more first-hand information and to hear divergent views from the parties directly involved. Of course, visits are not ends in themselves, but the means to strengthen our political will and efficiency in our efforts to solve African conflicts.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the most serious problems plaguing Africa. The Lusaka accords were signed almost six months ago, but the peace process remains bogged down in difficulties. The United Nations and the Security Council have been quite slow in responding to the situation. At our open debate yesterday, several countries expressed criticism in that regard. The Council should rethink this problem as soon as possible. After all, it is never too late to make amends.

China welcomes the news that both the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the rebel group have accepted the former President of Botswana, Mr. Masira, as the Facilitator for the national political dialogues. We support the holding of such national political dialogues between the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as soon as possible.

However, we wish to emphasize that it is also an immediate priority for the Council and the United Nations to send in military observers and peacekeeping troops as soon as possible, because there can be effective monitoring

and maintenance of the ceasefire only when a United Nations peacekeeping mission is deployed there. That will create a relatively stable climate and situation in which national political dialogue can be conducted smoothly and other elements of the Lusaka Agreement can be gradually implemented. Otherwise, nothing is possible.

We are very much in agreement with the views expressed yesterday by some representatives that the Council's ability to push through a settlement of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with concrete actions would be the litmus test of the importance the Council attaches to African conflicts. In this connection, while we look forward to the smooth implementation of resolution 1279 (1999), and welcome the Secretariat's preparations for this purpose, we also expect — and this is more important — that Council members will be unanimous on taking concrete actions as soon as possible for the deployment of military observers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): I wish to express Namibia's appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing this open briefing on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also wish to thank you for your presence in our meeting this morning. We thank Under-Secretary-General Miyet for the briefing, and we also wish to thank Ambassador Holbrooke for the information he provided to us following his recent trip to Africa. We sincerely hope that his visit to the region will bear fruitful results for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We welcome the appointment of the former President of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Joni Masira, as mediator for the national dialogue, as provided for under the Ceasefire Agreement on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We commend the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, which culminated in the appointment of a Facilitator acceptable to all Congolese parties. It is our hope that the necessary arrangements will now be made for the dialogue to take place without further delay.

We have all learned and have come to realize that UNITA could not have waged war against the Angolan people for such a long time without support from outside the country. The same experience will be repeated in the Congo, if we are not careful. Media reports indicate that investors from several countries are doing business with the rebel movement, especially in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These actions clearly

violate the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and should be halted. The plundering and looting of Congolese natural resources, including the granting of diamond rights, cannot be allowed to go on unabated.

We have all acknowledged that the Democratic Republic of the Congo peace process is difficult and complicated. Ambassador Holbrooke reiterated that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is not less complicated than Kosovo. We Africans are not deluding ourselves. We are saying that, just as this Council has felt the urgent need to intervene in other, no less complicated, situations, it should also do so in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Nobody is saying that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is easy. Nobody has said that. What we are saying is that the Council should assume its responsibilities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and here time is of the essence.

I agree with my colleague from Gambia, who made this point so eloquently. In fact, only last week, when Under-Secretary-General Prendergast briefed the Council on his trip to Burundi, he emphasized that the situation in Burundi and in the Great Lakes region in general is impacting the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. So, as the Council addresses this question of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we should not lose sight of what is happening around that country. As signatories to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, all parties, in particular the rebel groups and their supporters, Namibia believes should carry out their commitment. Hence, I again reiterate here Namibia's commitment to the full implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement.

Let me make one point clear. We shall passively maintain our position in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as we have done since the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement. However, we shall not offer ourselves as helpless targets when fired at by the rebels and those who support them.

On 12 December 1999, at the invitation of my President, President Sam Nujoma, a summit of heads of State of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) allied countries in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was held in Windhoek. We have made available to you, Mr. President, for Council members' information, a press release issued at the end of that summit. I will therefore only highlight a few points emanating from the summit.

The summit welcomed the appointment of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It reviewed the current status of the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and noted that significant progress had been made since its signing: the inauguration of the Joint Military Commission (JMC) and the deployment of the JMC observers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to verify ceasefire implementation.

Furthermore, the summit reiterated the commitment of the SADC allied countries

“to scrupulously observe the Ceasefire Agreement and speed up the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.” (*S/1999/1251, annex*)

It also noted the ceasefire violations, particularly in the area of Ikela and Basankusu, by the Congolese Rally for Democracy (Goma) and the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo rebel groups.

It would be ideal if all parties to the conflict ceased hostilities. We will continue to reiterate our call for putting a halt to the fighting.

The question we should ask ourselves is whether the Congolese people should continue to be held hostage by those whose interests are materialistically based and who are at the core of plundering Congolese resources.

We welcome the deployment of regional joint military commissions inside the Democratic Republic of the Congo to assist in the implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement. We also welcome the deployment of Organization of African Unity (OAU) observers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the hope that the Security Council will soon take a decision to authorize the deployment of military observers to that country.

In this respect, we hope that such deployment will take place rapidly given the provisions of Security Council resolution 1279 (1999). We cannot emphasize this point enough. From our experience, it is unrealistic to expect a perfect peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo or in any conflict situation before the Security Council takes action. The English say “The perfect is the enemy of the good”. If we wait for perfection in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we will lose everything that has been achieved in the Lusaka peace process.

My South African colleague could not have been clearer yesterday. In fact, some of us have wondered whether it is because the Democratic Republic of the Congo is in Africa. Otherwise, why does the goal post always seem to be shifting? SADC, as a subregional organization, continues vigorously to work towards a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank those Governments and organizations that have provided support for the Democratic Republic of the Congo peace process, and, in particular, those that have contributed to the requirements and funding of the Joint Military Commission. We encourage them to continue their support. Likewise, we call on others to give positive consideration to contributing to the United Nations and OAU trust funds.

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has an external dimension to it. Even if this were not the case, the Security Council still has a responsibility towards that situation, and we look forward to the Secretary-General's report in January.

The President: I thank the representative of Namibia for his kind words expressed to me.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil)(*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to Under-Secretary-General Miyet for the briefing he presented to us and to Ambassador Holbrooke for the report on his visit to Africa.

As previous speakers have done, I would like to refer to the dialogue that took place yesterday involving the representative of South Africa and Ambassador Holbrooke. I come out of a somewhat more dialectical tradition than does Ambassador Peter van Walsum, so I believe that in certain political situations, when two sides are presenting contradictory arguments both can be right.

I believe that this is the case. I agree with Ambassador Andjaba that no one could make a firmer, more forceful and more eloquent presentation than the African call made yesterday by Ambassador Kumalo for a more significant United Nations presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I also think that what we want to specify here is that the call so eloquently presented is not an artificial one, it is not artificially contrived. We could imagine that the Lusaka Agreement could have done without the United Nations presence, because there are peace agreements in other parts of the world in which the United Nations do not have a

role. If the call was so strong and clear, I believe that those who signed the Agreement were clearly aware that if the United Nations were absent from the Agreement, the Agreement would be more difficult to fulfil.

Therefore, the argument that can be made — and I believe previous speakers have made it — is that if a United Nations peacekeeping force had been put in place immediately after the signing of the Agreements, given all the difficulties and imperfections, as Ambassador Andjaba pointed out, perhaps today we would have a slightly different situation, because the presence of that force could have had a deterrent effect, and the violations of the Agreement might not have happened.

This kind of argument, which is called “*contrafactual*”, is very useful in academic theses, but for resolving political problems, it is of somewhat limited value. At any rate, we should pay close attention to this element. This is not an artificial call. I believe, as my African colleagues have underscored, that the call is necessary in order for the accord to have the appropriate results — not merely to interrupt the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but to have an impact on the whole region.

I think that Ambassador Holbrooke's argument is valid. We must deal with the problem of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with all necessary realism. Were the United Nations to fail in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the consequences would go far beyond that country itself. The very authority of the Security Council would be adversely affected; therefore, I believe the Democratic Republic of the Congo is an important test for the United Nations. This is very clear, and there is no need to elaborate on it.

How do we reconcile two contradictory positions, both of which are right? It is not easy. I believe that my colleagues, especially my African colleagues, presented very clearly the need for the Security Council to act very, very swiftly. Ambassador Dejammet has drawn our attention to the need for a concept of operations to be developed in a very precise and clear-cut way. I believe that would be essential, with the support of other factors that been pointed out, such as the appointment of the ex-President of Botswana to facilitate the dialogue. All these are positive elements that we must certainly take into account in seeking a solution of the problem.

I wish to conclude by saying that it is obvious that in this operation, we will have to have prudence and a

sense of realism. I would simply like to say that we should not forget an adjective that was used over and over again in the discussions when we began to try to tackle the problem of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and that is the adjective “robust”. The strength of peacekeeping operations would have to be “robust”, and I believe if we analyze all the consequences of that adjective and add “sent urgently”, we could begin to solve the problem.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the United Kingdom.

I thank Mr. Miyet for his briefing, and I also thank Ambassador Holbrooke both for his contribution and for his generous remarks of praise about me. He may not be a son of Africa, but he is proving to be a good friend of Africa, and that is much appreciated.

The messages we have heard today are very sobering. Five months after the Lusaka signing, we are coming to a critical moment. There is a peace agreement, and institutions have been established to take forward its implementation. United Nations liaison officers and Organization of African Unity (OAU) observers are on the ground. The United Nations is making preparations and is planning for a peacekeeping force. I want to see it deployed as soon as it is feasible on the ground to do so — not a day before, and not a day after.

We need to recognize, as others have indicated, that the situation is deteriorating. The parties are not all complying with their commitments under Lusaka. The renewed fighting we are seeing threatens a return to full-scale war, and that is very worrying.

The Accord is fragile. But there is no alternative to the negotiated peace provided for by Lusaka. Everything rests on its successful implementation. The Security Council as a whole — and its members individually — must play their part in driving the process forward, both through political and diplomatic support, but also through practical assistance. I suggest we focus on six areas in particular.

First, we must insist that the parties — all of them — return to their Lusaka obligations. We need to keep on making clear, publicly and privately, that there is no alternative to the negotiated peace provided for by the Lusaka Agreement and I very much agree with Ambassador Holbrooke and others on that point. We need to be clear that without their support for Lusaka, the international community cannot help implement it. We need to be clear that the parties’ support or otherwise for Lusaka will

condition their own relationship with the international community. Similarly, outside support for parties who break the ceasefire must be publicized and condemned.

Secondly, we need to do all we can — individually and collectively to support the Lusaka framework through help to the mechanisms established to implement the Agreement. Britain has offered money to fund the Democratic Republic of the Congo national debate. British officers are deployed in the region as part of MONUC. I am pleased to tell the Security Council today that our Department for International Development has announced a further funding of £100,000 to the Joint Military Commission (JMC), in addition to the £50,000 we have already provided. With our strong support, the European Union has pledged to do all it can to help — for example, with up to 1.2 million euro for the JMC. We should continue to look at what more we can each do to help, and encourage others to follow suit.

Thirdly, we should support the deployment of an effective United Nations force to help implement Lusaka. We are ready to support a viable United Nations peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But that can only be, and must be, an operation which helps the parties implement an agreement to which they themselves are committed. We cannot enforce compliance. There must be a clear ceasefire and withdrawal arrangements consent of all of the Governments concerned to a United Nations deployment and commitment to a viable political process on internal and external security issues, and adequate guarantees of security and freedom of movement for United Nations personnel, including a Security Council mandate providing the United Nations mission with the ability to protect itself on the basis of robust rules of engagement and adequate armament.

Any United Nations force deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo should, at a minimum, be capable of monitoring the ceasefire, of monitoring and verifying the withdrawal of all foreign forces and of investigating reports of military activities by other armed groups. But the deployment of United Nations troops will not in itself guarantee peace and security for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other countries in the region. They must bear the principal responsibility for their own future.

Fourthly, we need to move ahead in developing a plan for the successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of the armed militia groups active in

the region, whose presence is one of the key root causes of the conflict. DDR is critical for the successful implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and for lasting peace in the region. Without it, the Agreement will fail. Any successful DDR programme will require a political, not military, solution; commitment by all Governments concerned to end support for the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR)/Interahamwe and other armed groups; commitment by the Governments concerned to foster an environment which will enable all other militia personnel who accept DDR to return and restart their lives and commitment by the international community to monitor and assist this process; and sustained financial support. We urge the parties, through the JMC to continue to work to draw up a credible plan that will attract the levels of international support that we need to make implementation possible. This means working in close collaboration with the OAU and the United Nations, whose support and input will be vital.

Fifthly, we must address profiteering from and exploitation of the vast natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These are being used by all sides to sustain the war. All parties must ensure that commercial dealings of this nature are legal under relevant domestic and international law, transparent, consistent with States' arrangements with the international financial institutions and benefit the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, not private individuals. We must be prepared to take action to close down illegal commerce.

Sixthly, we should sustain our support for an international conference on the Great Lakes to address the region's underlying problems. But this should only take place once the parties have implemented the main elements of Lusaka. The conference cannot be an alternative to the Lusaka Agreement.

Ultimately the only people who can bring peace to the region are the leaders of the region.

It has taken too long to choose a facilitator for the national dialogue. We very much welcome the appointment yesterday of former President Masire of Botswana. It is now important that all those concerned move swiftly and without preconditions to the start of that dialogue.

We hope too that the Political Committee established by the Lusaka Agreement will convene at an early date to discuss implementation. Without their engagement and input the ceasefire will fail.

These are our thoughts on the way forward for Lusaka. Africa needs our support to secure a lasting peace and stability in the Great Lakes region. We must do all we can to help deliver it.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

Mr. Mungara-Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, my delegation would like to say again how grateful we are to your country for organizing this debate on the situation in Africa and specifically, today, on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Your presence with us this morning eloquently reflects your country's enormous interest in the ills afflicting countries in Africa.

I should also like to thank Mr. Miyet for his statement and for the useful and detailed information he gave us. Also, like others, I would like to welcome progress made in the activities of the Joint Military Commission, given the resources available to it.

I welcome the appointment of former President Masire of Botswana as the facilitator for the inter-Congolese dialogue. It is a good choice. As we have seen, he has been accepted by all the parties. However, for the dialogue to occur in an appropriate atmosphere there are some basic requirements, and the disturbing reports about ceasefire violations hardly reassure us that the dialogue will begin soon in a way that can lead to national reconciliation.

As the situation is extremely fragile, the Security Council must act quickly to avoid a continuation of the vacuum — for which the Council has often been criticized — which could be exploited by the parties in order to resume hostilities on an even broader scale. After the investment of so much effort, and after so many debates, to achieve a negotiated, lasting settlement of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we think that is not what the Council wants to see happen.

We are aware of the difficulties, but remain convinced that with a firm commitment by everyone, including the parties themselves, we will be able to arrive at a settlement of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We believe that the Security Council should focus on its will to settle the conflict rather than on the difficulties, of which we are all aware.

Someone rightly said here in the Chamber that it would not be realistic to want to obtain absolute security guarantees. We believe that is completely true. It has not been a requirement in other situations, and we see no reason why it should be in the case of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Security Council has rightly always been concerned with human rights and the suffering of civilians in armed conflict. Taking swift action to resolve the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo could spare the Congolese people further suffering as a result of the fighting.

Africa can no longer be satisfied with words from the Security Council. It expects real, immediate action in the difficult situations it is experiencing, such as that in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and has already waited too long since the signing of the Lusaka Agreement last July. The Security Council must shoulder its responsibilities. It would also be desirable to continue to exert pressure on the parties to ensure that they comply with their commitments under the Lusaka Agreement.

The President: With the Council's permission, I should like to suspend the meeting to enable me to keep my appointment with the Secretary-General. The Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Ambassador Greenstock, will resume the meeting immediately after my departure. I extend my apologies, but I would not want to curtail an interesting discussion.

I also thank members of the Security Council for their forbearance in my presiding over the Council and for their kind remarks. I certainly found it extremely interesting, and I feel that we are moving forward, both in terms of Africa policy and in terms of looking at how the Security Council might interact more informally, as we did yesterday and to some extent will be able to do today.

The meeting was suspended at 12.12 p.m. and resumed at 12.15 p.m.

Ms. Mernik (Slovenia): Our delegation thanks the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Bernard Miyet, for his briefing on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Slovenia, as an outgoing elected member of the Security Council, is very pleased indeed that after a year and three months of ongoing armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo the Council members

finally agreed to take, and have taken, the first concrete step in assisting the process of restoring peace in the country by approving resolution 1279 (1999) on 30 November, which authorizes the United Nations to begin preparations for the deployment of 500 military observers.

In this connection, the Slovenian delegation wishes to express once again its appreciation to Mr. Frederick Chiluba, the President of Zambia, for his work and efforts, which — through the diplomacy conducted at the level of African heads of State — resulted in the so-called Lusaka peace Agreement, which is a first major contribution towards peace in the country. The non-violation of its provisions will provide the basis for further United Nations assistance, which is undoubtedly needed. The Agreement should be implemented through effective cooperation with the Organization of African Unity and its Joint Military Commission.

During his briefing of the Security Council at its meeting on 21 September 1999, President Chiluba appealed to the United Nations for generous contributions and assistance in the normalization of the situation in the country. He requested the Council to provide support and to authorize the peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an action that can be defined as one of short-term tasks to be completed in the nearest future, hopefully.

There are also long-term tasks that will have to be accomplished. One of them, as mentioned by President Chiluba on that occasion, is the process of internal Congolese dialogue, which will be facilitated by the former President of Botswana and which might need the adequate support of the Security Council — something that President Chiluba also requested on the same occasion at the open briefing in September.

On many previous occasions members of the Council have spoken of a regional conference to provide a solid framework for future cooperation in the region and for the achievement of irreversible, durable peace. Slovenia believes that the humanitarian needs of the Congolese people have to be met. The Council's help is needed in the mobilization of humanitarian assistance to refugees and internally displaced persons, the facilitation of their return and the protection of children, in particular child soldiers, is needed. But, furthermore, the investigation of the massacres that have taken place in the recent past is also one of the tasks related to the protection of human rights and will help in facilitating long-lasting peace. At a later stage, assistance from the

international community as a whole in economic reconstruction and development will be needed.

Slovenia hopes that in the near future the Security Council — functioning and working in a new composition — will be completely successful in finding solutions to the problems in Africa today, the most challenging of which is the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): A great deal has been said already, and there is really little for me to add to the arguments that have been made today. We agree with what has been said and, indeed, we can understand our African colleagues when they emotionally and very convincingly speak about the need to take urgent decisions. We can also understand those delegations that see the need to establish the necessary conditions for that to be done.

But I believe that no one has denied the need for the parties to the Lusaka Agreement strictly to comply with the provisions therein. It seems to us that this is a very important element of the consensus that we are attempting to reach here in the Security Council.

I would recall, as my colleagues have, that Security Council resolution 1279 (1999) lays the foundation for the swift deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo of up to 500 United Nations military observers, who would require the necessary support elements. The Security Council thereby has clearly stated its willingness to proceed with this deployment, on the basis of subsequent recommendations from the Secretariat that would take account of the conclusions of the technical survey team currently in the area. We are deeply concerned at the fact that the technical team — through no fault of its own — has not been able to complete its work on time. But its conclusions and the relevant recommendations of the Secretary-General will, we trust, enable the Security Council to take the appropriate decision.

Right now I believe that there are two decisive factors: the willingness of the parties to the conflict to comply in good faith with their commitments, and their cooperation with the United Nations, primarily with respect to practical matters relating to the work of the technical survey team.

Many here have spoken about double standards, which, in view of the experience of Srebrenica and Somalia, is understandable. My delegation would not use the very tragic experience of Somalia and Srebrenica as a

pretext. It would not be right if those two failures were to stand in the way of further United Nations peacekeeping operations. There are lessons we must learn, and one of them, particularly with respect to Somalia, is that when the Security Council authorizes an operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, it will be necessary to find countries that are willing to provide contingents. But it is not just a question of the security of the contingents and the need to minimize risks to the extent possible. We must also be sure that the contingents will be paid and that the costs of United Nations peacekeeping activities will be provided for.

We know that in the case of Somalia, the United Nations has not yet paid the troop-contributing countries, and there still remain outstanding debts related to the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM). Just because Somalia was a mistake does not mean that one does not have to pay for one's mistakes. Incidentally, Russia has debts — arrears on the Somalia operation. But these are the only arrears that Russia has vis-à-vis the United Nations, and we are committed to paying them. About an hour ago, I gave the Secretary-General a check for \$25 million in payment of our arrears under UNOSOM.

I say this because the question of financing United Nations peacekeeping operations is very closely related to the matter we are discussing today. It is necessary to bear this point in mind in dealing with the specific aspects of a future operation in the Congo.

I should like also like to support those who have drawn attention today to the particular importance of the swift organization of a national dialogue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as provided for in the Lusaka Agreement. We would very much like to see, as soon as possible, concrete steps taken to organize that dialogue.

Finally, I would like once again to reaffirm Russia's support for the holding, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, of an international conference on peace and security in the Great Lakes region. Of course, a consensus among participating countries on the objective of such a conference would first be necessary. But it is clear to us that the agenda for such a conference could not be confined to the question of providing assistance in the rehabilitation of the region. We believe that it must have a very strong political component, which would make it

possible to consider the key issues of the strengthening of peace and security in the region as a whole.

The President: Before coming back to Mr. Miyet to ask him to respond to the questions and comments raised, I would like to give the floor to those members of the Council to make a second intervention.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): I will be brief, and I wish to comment on what I think has been another excellent discussion on three levels.

First, with respect to style, I am deeply impressed by the informality here. I think it is what the founding fathers of the United Nations — there were no founding mothers, I regret to say — had in mind, and I congratulate you, Mr. President, and your colleague from London for that.

Secondly, I am interested in what I think is an emerging consensus on most aspects of the problem here, and therefore I wish to focus on a point that I will return to repeatedly in the coming weeks, as will my colleagues. I think Ambassador Andjaba of Namibia put it very well in his characteristically eloquent and forceful statement. This goes to the question of what we are going to approve. Let it be clear for my Government — and, I believe, for every Government here — that there is going to be support for peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There is no question about it. Everyone here is conscious of Rwanda, particularly on a day when the United Nations has courageously issued a report of self-criticism for the second time in a month, and I congratulate the Secretary-General and his colleagues for that candour and courage.

The issue therefore is not whether we are going to support peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I repeat, it is not whether our country will support it — I believe the nation-States here are going to support it — it is not whether, it is when and how. I am very glad that Mr. Miyet is with us today, because I think that there is a general message here, certainly for my Government and, I believe, for many others, which is that we want to vote for the resolution, but we need to know what we are voting for: the mandate, the size and the costs.

There are many different ideas kicking around right now, and reasonably so; this is a very difficult problem. But I urge the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue the consultations it has been having with many Governments here, including our own. I have heard some Ambassadors represented here — as well as some of our colleagues who have not spoken but who are attending this

meeting and have the deepest vested interest in this issue, because their countries are in Central Africa — express confusion as to what the project is. I hope that as a result of this meeting we will be able to accelerate, intensify and clarify what it is that we will be asked to approve. That requires a lot of staff work internally, and our Government is prepared to do that.

Again, Mr. President, I wish to express my very profound appreciation for what you have done. I know that you had all of this planned before. I said that January would be the month of Africa for the United States in the Security Council. I think you have effectively proved that December is also a month of Africa under your skilful and visionary presidency.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words.

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): I can subscribe to just about everything that Ambassador Holbrooke said, especially his comments that it is not a question of whether we support peacekeeping, but when and how. That is precisely the position of the Netherlands, too.

Just for the record, I would like to add two observations. First, I have not yet mentioned the fact that the Netherlands, too, is greatly pleased by the fact that former President Masire has accepted the job, and has been accepted, as facilitator in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Finally, I would like to mention the fact that the Netherlands has made approximately \$200,000 available to the Organization of African Unity for the Joint Military Commission. There is no conditionality involved here, but, when Mr. Miyet said that the next meeting of the Joint Military Commission would take place on 20 January, it occurred to me that it might be conceivable to ask it to step up the frequency of its meetings a little.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, endorse the comments of the representative of the United States in asking the Secretariat, like so many others, to do what it envisaged. That is not a reminder for Mr. Miyet; it simply means that we are interested in his soon-to-be-issued conclusions on the concept of operations and his clarifications. I like that word, “clarifications”. It fits with the objective of having the kind of operation that is capable of being implemented. In our view, as the Council knows, it should also be applied to other United

Nations endeavours with regard to other delicate situations in other regions of the world.

A consensus has been emerging with respect to the desirability and the possibility of mounting a peacekeeping operation — I believe that now it is clear that there is a consensus — and on the urgent desire of all of us to move ahead swiftly. In addition to that consensus, it seems to me that another idea has received vigorous backing — the idea of an international conference on the Great Lakes to be jointly sponsored by the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations.

In this regard, I listened carefully to the conclusions of the President of the Council and to the comments that were made by the representative of the Russian Federation. That is important, because, at the outset, support for this idea did not have so much conviction. It is well known that at some stage we will have to bring the leaders of these countries around the table to speak about their problems — issues of border security and the protection of minorities, which are interrelated. Otherwise, the sources of conflict and discord will remain.

We believe that such an international conference must also be an overarching objective in the work of our Council. In this regard, I would like ask the representative of the Secretariat to invite the next President of the Council, who will have a great deal of work to do next month and will have to evince his continued interest in the subject, to call for consideration of the subject of an international conference. We will have to ensure that during that upcoming presidency, building on the work done this month under the presidency of the United Kingdom, the Security Council will manage to make tangible progress on the ground and undertake a genuine diplomatic enterprise leading to an overall political and diplomatic settlement of the problem.

I believe that it would be a positive development if, through the various open debates that are envisaged under the presidency of the United States, the idea of holding an international conference on the Great Lakes were given real impetus. That will mean work in the future for other Presidents, because the discussion of Africa will not be limited to one month. There will be no need for statements to the press. I believe that the issue of Africa, like other issues that are capable of giving rise to crises, must be considered by the Council on a permanent basis. It must be on the agenda of Council in February, March and April. These issues and questions will remain on the agenda of the Council. I very much hope that the objective of convening

an international conference will begin to take shape under the upcoming presidency of the United States.

The President: I now give the floor to Mr. Miyet to respond to the comments and questions that have been raised.

Mr. Miyet (*spoke in French*): Before dealing with the many questions relating to the Joint Military Commission (JMC), I shall respond to two general questions. I shall try not to be evasive in responding to the representative of Bahrain. He asked why progress in the Lusaka process was so slow, particularly at the political level. Was that question addressed to the Secretariat or to the parties? That is the question that I wish to throw back at him. He also asked why the United Nations was so reticent. Was that question addressed to the Secretariat or to the Council itself? Those questions can be asked in relation to our discussion today.

With regard to the Secretariat, I shall respond by making three points. First, the Secretary-General, who was here yesterday, repeated that he was firmly committed to the whole of the African continent and to ensuring that the United Nations is present there and plays its part. That is a full and complete commitment. A plan has been proposed for a three-phase operation following the signing of the Lusaka Agreement, and we are trying to implement that three-phase plan. A number of elements are the responsibility of the Secretariat itself, while others are dependent on the situation on the ground or on the means provided by the Security Council. However, sometimes we have the feeling of being ahead, and sometimes we are criticized for moving too fast, as happened when we dispatched the military liaison officers.

We hope that during the course of phase two, we will have additional information on the 500 military observers. How will they be deployed and in what conditions on the ground? What kind of logistical means and protection will they have? Will the technical team on the ground be able to provide us with information? We cannot get the information by reading a crystal ball. This is one important element that we are working on constantly. As the Council knows, the technical assessment team has been in Kinshasa for several months now. We are making every effort in the hope that it will soon be deployed and, fortunately, we are now working with the Joint Military Commission so as to be able to complete that work.

The second aspect of our commitment and resolve relates to the support provided to the Joint Military Commission. Here, I am responding to Ambassador Dejammet. I would remind him that we already have four officers in Lusaka providing support to the Joint Military Commission. From the beginning, we hoped that the Joint Military Commission would have a permanent secretariat by 20 December. Here again, the United Nations is doing its utmost to support and facilitate its establishment.

And here, France made a welcome financial contribution, for which I am grateful; thanks to a United Nations aeroplane, we were able to help in the deployment of the OAU military liaison officers to a number of sites in eastern Congo. So we have been active, and, with a sense of serious-mindedness, will continue to be active.

The second part of my response relates to our need for all necessary resources. We are constantly aware of the need for the greatest seriousness, responsibility and clear-mindedness, something that a number of delegations have mentioned. Some have spoken of past tragedies the United Nations has faced; two recent reports are reminders of these. As members know, the Secretary-General and his team in my Department are fully aware of the need to operate with maximal security, but without setting preconditions that would make any operation completely impossible.

Our aim is to implement the phases of the plan as quickly as possible so that we can play a positive part and can have the needed influence on the parties, with a view to giving the peace process every chance of success. We want to do this credibly; some have referred to "robustness" and to the force's deterrent power. We have these matters in mind.

I believe that Ambassador Holbrooke used the word "confusion"; let me respond by saying that there is no confusion. There are three phases, and each phase must be envisaged in terms of the resources it needs. Phase two involves 500 observers, and it goes without saying that protecting them, deploying them and ensuring communication and freedom of movement for them — all with the necessary resources — are important to us. That is what we are working on at present.

Let me return to Ambassador Lavrov's comment, which I think is absolutely fundamental. These observers must be deployed in a context in which they have the resources they need. Here, one test is that we must know whether or not the Security Council will provide full

financial support and whether or not the troops, logistics, communications and engineering will be made available to the Secretary-General so that the mission can be deployed on the ground. It is not a question solely of taking a decision; it is a question of having the necessary resources, including the troops and equipment needed for an operation of this kind.

In that connection, we welcome the recent Security Council resolution that enables us to begin the procurement of equipment. A draft budget of \$31 million, plus \$500,000 for humanitarian assistance, has been submitted to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to enable us to move ahead.

Returning to the Joint Military Commission, this is one of the keys to the success of the operation. We must know with certainty the nature of the determination, will and purpose of the parties, and the JMC can be a mechanism for addressing any difficulties that might arise. It is therefore absolutely essential to establish a permanent structure that would cooperate closely with the United Nations so that we can understand the intentions of the parties and so that the parties can in turn understand the intentions of the United Nations and its capabilities and modalities for action. This was mentioned by the representative of the Netherlands, and it is of importance to us. That is why the links between the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations are so important.

Ambassador Dejammet asked whether the Joint Military Commission could make its reports available. The JMC does not answer to MONUC; it answers to the OAU. We shall approach the OAU for permission to make the reports available, and for our part we feel that this would be a welcome development.

A third element of my response relates to the Secretariat's unambiguous determination to move forward quickly. As far as we are concerned, being serious-minded does not mean being slow. We are proceeding at a certain pace; as I have said, we have on occasion been criticized for moving too fast. At one point, this gave rise to some uncertainty, some questions and some doubts in the minds of the parties themselves. We want to maintain our present pace, bearing in mind the constant need for complete transparency and for the full cooperation of the parties, *inter alia* within the Joint Military Commission.

As to the proposals to be submitted to the Council early in January 2000, this is clearly a process that is still

under way. If we already had all the final elements of the concept of operations, members of the Council would obviously have these before them. This is related to the decisions of the Joint Military Commission; these decisions, especially the most recent, have been useful from this standpoint. We also must have a very clear idea of the needs on the ground; here, the conclusions of the technical survey team will be most useful. Further, the three phases of the operation must be integrated into an evolving process. In our view, phase two cannot be regarded as an end in itself; it is a phase that should give rise to the development of phase three, which will be a broader peacekeeping operation taking us to the very conclusion of the process that began at Lusaka: the withdrawal of forces.

Here in New York and in consultation with our representatives on the ground, our thinking has evolved over the past few weeks, and it could continue to evolve. We want in any event to cooperate with the parties and discuss all these matters with them, and also with members of the Security Council and with troop contributors, which will all have something to say. But for our part, the result of this process will be what we regard as reasonable for carrying out the mission, for ensuring the safety of our troops and for trying to provide security. It will not be a compromise — of necessity a feeble compromise — that would seek to satisfy other demands.

The President: I thank Mr. Miyet for the answers and clarifications he provided in that very comprehensive further statement.

I should like now, in my capacity as President of the Council, to draw some brief and informal conclusions from this meeting for the Council's consideration in its later consultations. The debates of yesterday and today have left one very clear message: the Democratic Republic of the Congo is the major challenge facing Africa, the United Nations and the international community as a whole at the end of this century. One in five African States are involved in the conflict; a vast region of Africa is affected; and the stability and future development of the region are at stake.

Expectations of the international community are correspondingly high. The Lusaka Agreement, brokered by the region with the involvement of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, is predicated on major international support, without which it cannot succeed. It is clearly the view of the Security Council that there is no alternative to Lusaka. It is a good Agreement. As Ambassador Holbrooke and others have made clear, it addresses the key issues at the heart of this conflict, the

foreign military presence on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the dangers posed to the Democratic Republic of the Congo's neighbours by armed groups and the urgent need for a national dialogue to work towards a more inclusive and representative political system in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The need for the international community to act quickly to help implement the Agreement through, *inter alia*, further United Nations deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been widely stressed here today. So has the urgency of building on the steps we have already taken to facilitate the speedy deployment of observers and their support elements through resolution 1279 (1999). The Council will have taken these points to heart.

The point has also been strongly made that the parties must show their determination to meet their commitments before it would be right or sensible for the United Nations to deploy more widely. These commitments include, first, the ending of ceasefire violations and agreeing on workable withdrawal arrangements, most particularly through an effective Joint Military Commission (JMC); secondly, full consent by all the parties to a United Nations presence including assurances of security and cooperation; thirdly, the commencement of meaningful national dialogue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo under an agreed facilitator; and fourthly, progress on tackling the external security issues, including realistic proposals for the disarmament, demobilization and peaceful reintegration of armed groups.

So, the clear message from today's discussion has been that the Security Council and the Secretariat must stand ready to do their part in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and not shirk this enormous challenge. But in practice they can only do so as part of a credible peace agreement and a wider process in which we all — international community and regional players — have key roles to fulfil and resources to contribute. This may in due course lead up to an international conference on the Great Lakes. All those with responsibilities in the Democratic

Republic of the Congo under the Lusaka Agreement must take them up urgently. The Security Council will in parallel act as effectively and rapidly as it can. The Council must return to this subject soon, analyzing and acting on the import of this debate. It is welcome that the next presidency of the Council is planning in that sense.

There are no other speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.