



Security Council

Fifty-fifth year

4187th meeting

Monday, 14 August 2000, 10.40 a.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Hasmy	(Malaysia)
<i>Members:</i>	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Duval
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Mali	Mr. Kasse
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Ms. Achouri
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchynski
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Ms. Soderberg

Agenda

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2000/785).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2000/785)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Japan and Norway, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Kobayashi (Japan) and Mr. Brattskar (Norway) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: 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 Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2000/785).

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2000/793, letter dated 11 August 2000 from Ethiopia.

I now give the floor to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Bernard Miyet, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure.

Mr. Miyet (*spoke in French*): The report of the Secretary-General of 9 August 2000 (S/2000/785), which is now before the Council, was submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1312 (2000), of 31 July 2000, in which the Council authorized the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) until 31 January 2001, with an initial deployment of 100 military observers and the necessary civilian support staff.

The same resolution requested the Secretary-General to pursue the planning of the Mission and to begin to take the necessary administrative measures to organize it. In this regard, the report of the Secretary-General provides a concept of operations and recommendations for the expansion of the Mission. Additionally, the report gives an account of the political and humanitarian developments that have taken place since the report contained in document S/2000/530 was issued, on 2 June 2000.

With regard to the political situation in the area, members of the Council will no doubt remember that in his report of 30 June the Secretary-General informed the Council that Ethiopia and Eritrea had signed at Algiers on 18 June an Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). At the OAU summit held from 10 to 12 July at Lomé, the heads of State or Government encouraged the parties to continue their negotiations on outstanding matters under the auspices of the OAU, with a view to achieving lasting peace. In this regard, the parties engaged in indirect talks at Washington at the beginning of July on modalities for the delimitation and demarcation of the border, as well as on the issue of compensation. As the report of 9 August notes, the talks adjourned without a formal statement concerning the outcome of the negotiations.

I now turn to the humanitarian situation. It is clear that the armed conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea has had tragic effects on the affected populations. In June 2000, the number of displaced persons on Eritrean territory surpassed 1.1 million. Moreover, some 94,000 Eritreans have taken refuge in the Sudan since the resumption of hostilities in May 2000. Since the conclusion of the 18 June Agreement

on Cessation of Hostilities, there have been spontaneous returns of Eritreans who wished to return before the end of the planting season. However, the immediate return of many refugees and displaced persons will be impossible due to the lamentable state of housing and basic infrastructure, the loss of personal property and farming implements, the lack of social services and the risks posed by mines.

Those conditions are aggravated by the fact that the rainy season has begun, and the depletion of food stocks by September 2000 is an extremely worrisome possibility. Given this dramatic situation, it is essential for the international community to respond generously and immediately to the January 2000 humanitarian appeal, which was revised last July, and to contribute the estimated \$87.3 needed to address the humanitarian needs of 1.1 million war-affected Eritreans.

At the same time, the conflict has resulted in 500 civilian deaths and 750 orphans in the Tigray region of Ethiopia. In addition, almost 650 civilians are reported missing. As the Council is aware, this situation created by the war has been compounded by a disastrous drought that has afflicted Ethiopia and brought the number of people needing emergency food aid to about 10 million. Four agricultural seasons have been lost, over 70,000 hectares of arable land have become uncultivable, and a large number of Ethiopians are unable to return to their villages in the border areas due to the presence of unexploded ordnance and mines. Once again, massive humanitarian relief is required there in order to assist the affected Ethiopian population.

In June, an assessment mission organized by the United Nations team in Ethiopia was dispatched for the first time to the contested areas of Badme and Zala Ambesa, where, due to intermittent fighting, people have been deprived of all humanitarian aid for two years. The assessment mission focused its attention on the ways of meeting the immediate needs of the population, the rehabilitation of devastated zones and the diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases following massive population movements and military occupation.

I should now like to address in greater detail the concept of operations to be put into effect by the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. As the report of 30 June notes (S/2000/643), the Secretary-General dispatched a reconnaissance mission to the

area from 4 to 18 July 2000 to discuss with the OAU and the two parties modalities for possible United Nations assistance in implementing the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. Also, as planned, in the first phase the United Nations deployed a team of five liaison officers to Addis Ababa and Asmara to undertake preliminary consultations with the parties and the OAU, and to prepare for the initial deployment of the 100 military observers and civilian support staff authorized by resolution 1312 (2000).

With respect to the second phase, during which the first 100 military observers and the support staff will be deployed, preparations are under way for the deployment beginning at the end of this month. The activities envisaged in the course of the second phase pursuant to resolution 1312 (2000) are described in paragraph 44 of the report of the Secretary-General now before the Council. In the meantime it will be essential to dispatch as soon as possible a mine clearance team, in accordance with the Agreement of Cessation of Hostilities and resolution 1312 (2000). At the end of last week, I wrote a letter to the two Ministers for Foreign Affairs in an effort to speed up that team's deployment.

The mandate envisaged for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the full deployment of which might take place in a third phase once it is authorized by the Security Council, is described in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's current report (S/2000/785). The provisions of the mandate of the Mission were drawn up in accordance with the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and on the basis of the conclusions of the reconnaissance mission that visited the region from 4 to 18 July. As indicated in the report, the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea would be headed by a special representative of the Secretary-General and would be made up of a number of components specializing in the political, military and administrative areas, as well as in mine clearance and information.

The military component of the Mission would be headed by a Major-General. The Mission would operate in the temporary security zone and adjacent areas. As described in paragraphs 45 and 46 of the report, the Mission would work in close coordination with representatives of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to carry out the envisaged tasks and to facilitate the implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities.

Moreover, according to the Agreement, the United Nations and the OAU will establish a Military Coordination Commission that includes representatives of the two parties; its task will be to coordinate and resolve matters, particularly military ones related to the implementation of the mandate of the Mission. It is clearly important that the Commission be set up as soon as possible. Moreover, it is envisaged that the United Nations Mission will coordinate its activities with the local and international humanitarian agencies in the temporary security zone and the adjacent areas by setting up a civilian and military coordination centre especially created for that purpose.

As pointed out in paragraph 18 of this report, to ensure that the Mission can effectively implement its mandate as proposed, the special representative and the force commander would maintain offices at Addis Ababa and Asmara. Regional headquarters would also be established at Mendefera in Eritrea and at Mekele in Ethiopia to maintain close links with the local authorities. For operational reasons, the main, but not sole, logistics support base would be established in Asmara, given its proximity to the Mission area of operations.

The area of operations of the United Nations Mission would be divided into three sectors: Sector West, Sector Centre and the Sector East. Regional sector headquarters would be established in Barentu in the west, Adigrat in the centre and Assab in the east. Each sector's personnel will be composed of a military observer group and an infantry battalion.

The Secretary-General invites the Security Council to consider the proposals contained in his report related to the expanded mandate and structure of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. As indicated in paragraph 48 and spelled out in detail in paragraphs 26 and 27 of the report, the deployment of a military force of 4,200 military personnel, including 220 military observers, 3 infantry battalions and the necessary support units has been proposed. Discussions are under way with the parties in this regard, and it is important that they show an open mind and the necessary flexibility to allow for the establishment of this force.

In his report, the Secretary-General again pays a tribute to President Bouteflika and the Organization of African Unity for having facilitated the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

We welcome the decision taken by the OAU at the Lomé summit to call on President Bouteflika to continue his efforts to bring about lasting peace between the two countries. The Secretary-General also expresses his appreciation for the fact that the United States and the European Union have effectively supported his mediation efforts. Moreover, we count on the Ethiopian and Eritrea authorities to fulfil the agreements undertaken in the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and to cooperate unreservedly with the United Nations Mission in the fulfilment of its mandate.

In the coming days it will be vital for the two parties to cooperate actively to ensure that the temporary security zone can be quickly established and that the necessary information can be made available to the Mission to allow the start of mine clearance activity, vital preconditions for beginning work in the zone.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Eritrea, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Seyoum (Eritrea) took a seat at the Council table.

Ms. Soderberg (United States of America): I appreciate the report of the Secretary-General and the update this morning by Under-Secretary-General Miyet. I know they have been very involved in this crisis from the beginning, almost two years ago. We appreciate the update.

I also want to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for calling this important open meeting, and we certainly join our colleagues in welcoming the representatives of Ethiopia and Eritrea to this Chamber.

May I ask our colleagues from Ethiopia and Eritrea to let this occasion mark a new chapter in their young bilateral relationship. At last, and following the payment of a horrific price, the guns have fallen silent. We implore the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea to

fill this silence with the language of compromise, reconciliation and hope. With the exception of our island State Members, all of us have neighbours and all of us share common borders. The challenge to the people of Ethiopia and Eritrea will be to determine what kind of border they want. They can easily have a green line, where concertina wire, backed by military force, marks a demarcation born of nothing more than a physical separation. That is not what we, as the Security Council, must seek. Such a complete division is certainly better than the resumption of conflict. But it might also be squandering a unique opportunity.

We urge the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea to aspire to more than the tragic experiences that produced decades-old lines across the Korean peninsula, the Middle East and the island of Cyprus. Instead, we believe that Eritrea and Ethiopia must turn towards the Southern African Development Community and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa model of integration, based on the free flow of people, goods and ideas. Looking further afield, perhaps Spain and Portugal provide a useful model for the necessary interrelationship that must be developed. Ethiopia and Eritrea are unique national entities that nonetheless share a range of common historical experiences. These two countries must develop a sophisticated bilateral relationship based on interdependence and a common agenda for prosperity.

Looking at the economic dynamo that is today's European Union, it is appropriate to point out that the original impetus for the European Union was the realization on the part of Germany and France that economic integration was the key to preventing forever the return to war.

The Security Council has an institutional concern here as well. Blue Helmets should not be viewed as some sort of substitute for a comprehensive peace agreement. They should be seen as the creators of the opportunity to achieve a peace based on shared values, shared cultures, shared borders and shared aspirations.

The growing United Nations presence in Ethiopia and Eritrea should calm tensions and create an enabling environment for the search for durable solutions. The search for better bilateral relations goes on forever, but the presence of United Nations peacekeepers should not.

We as a Council must ensure that the peacekeepers provide the catalyst for progress and not a justification for inaction on the political front.

What the parties must seek is something infinitely beyond the mere cessation of hostilities. Instead, we urge them to work — as President Abraham Lincoln said — for a just and lasting peace among nations.

We are in broad agreement with the recommendations contained in the recent Secretary-General's report on Ethiopia and Eritrea. Just as we did with Security Council resolution 1312 (2000) establishing the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, we are currently drafting a resolution and hope to move expeditiously to experts' negotiations to implement the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report.

In addition, the United States remains deeply concerned about the humanitarian issues, especially the renewed deportations, which are exacerbating the living conditions of many people affected by the conflict and are threatening to worsen relations between the two countries at a critical juncture in the peace process. We call on the Eritrean Government to allow full access for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to detainee and prisoner of war camps and ensure that any repatriations are done with the full involvement of the ICRC.

We also call upon the Ethiopian Government to ensure that appropriate international organizations, including the ICRC, have full access to Eritrean civilians in areas of Eritrea currently occupied by Ethiopia, and call on the Ethiopian Government to allow access to all Eritrean prisoners of war.

Lastly, we look forward to the rapid naming of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the quick deployment of a full United Nations Mission. That is the Security Council's obligation.

We expect of the parties more than the mere cessation of hostilities. The Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities signed under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) by Ethiopia and Eritrea makes explicit the commitment of the parties to determine their common border, including through the use of an arbitration mechanism, if a quick agreement cannot otherwise be reached. Indeed, this commitment appears no fewer than five times in the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

We as a Council must press for an agreement on the delimitation and demarcation of the common border as a critical component of a comprehensive peace agreement. This element will be essential if the peace between these two formerly warring neighbours is to be self-sustaining and beneficial to the people of both communities.

Our fondest hope is that both Governments will turn their attention to the genuine needs of their people: health, education, food security, jobs and housing. As we know, there is no peace dividend if the peace is based on mutual assured destruction, for that is merely a truce based on the maintenance of arms.

Ethiopia and Eritrea must instead build peace on mutual prosperity and mutual dependence, for that is a peace based on shared values and shared aspirations.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for the kind words she addressed to me.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): Allow me to begin, Mr. President, by thanking you for convening this open meeting on the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Let me also take this opportunity to pay special tribute to the former Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and President of Algeria, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and to the Secretary-General of the OAU, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, for their sustained efforts which culminated in the signing of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities between the Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea on 18 June 2000 in Algiers.

We also take this opportunity to thank the United Nations, the European Union, the United States of America and other members of the international community for their continued and unwavering support for the efforts of the OAU in resolving the conflict amicably.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, deserves our commendation for his commitment and dedication to the peaceful resolution of conflict in Africa, particularly the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We thank him for his comprehensive and, indeed, most thoughtful report before us today on the status of the proposed United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea, preparations for which are at an advanced stage.

Let me also thank Mr. Miyet for introducing the report of the Secretary-General and for the update he gave us this morning.

The signing of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of Ethiopia and the Government of Eritrea was a significant achievement and a major step forward in the peaceful resolution of the conflict between the two countries. Under the Agreement, the concerned parties committed themselves, among other things, first, to resolve the present crisis and any other dispute between them through peaceful and legal means, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charters of the OAU and the United Nations; secondly, to reject the use of force as a means of imposing solutions to disputes; and thirdly, to respect the borders existing at independence, as stated in OAU resolution AHG/Res.16 (1), adopted in Cairo in 1964, and, in this regard, determining them on the basis of pertinent colonial treaties and applicable international law, making use, to that end, of technical means to demarcate the borders and, in case of controversy, resorting to the appropriate means of arbitration.

Furthermore, the Agreement commits the parties to an immediate cessation of hostilities and stipulates that starting from the signature of the Agreement, all air and land attacks are to cease. In this regard, my delegation fully agrees with the assessment made in the report of the Secretary-General that to date the parties have shown the commitment and goodwill required to ensure the implementation of the ceasefire Agreement and the provisional agreements contained therein.

We call upon the parties to continue to demonstrate their commitment in good faith for the sake of peace, development and prosperity, not only for the two peoples concerned but also for the region and for Africa as a whole.

My delegation welcomes the holding of proximity talks last month in Washington on outstanding issues such as the modalities for the delimitation and demarcation of the border and the issue of compensation. In this connection, we congratulate President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who has been mandated by the OAU to continue his mediation efforts with a view to reaching a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, we urge the international community to generously provide financial assistance, bilaterally or through the United Nations country teams in both countries, to enable the

Governments concerned to cope with the consequences of the war and drought.

Of great concern to my delegation is the existence of landmines and unexploded ordnance, which remains a serious impediment to resettlement activities. According to a United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report, these landmines have killed or injured about 167 people, mostly children, since February this year. We call upon the international community to provide technical assistance to the countries concerned to enable them to successfully conduct their mine-clearance activities. We are pleased to learn that the United Nations Mine Action Service is preparing a mine action-assistance programme to help mitigate the threat posed by landmines and unexploded ordnance.

It is our hope that the public information component of the envisaged United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) will play a pivotal role in the dissemination not only of the mandate of UNMEE, but also of the mine awareness activities, with a view to sensitizing urban and rural communities to the dangers of landmines. This should be done in order to reduce and eventually eliminate the incidence of fatalities and injuries caused by landmines, especially among children and women. My delegation is encouraged that both countries have expressed willingness to provide UNMEE air time on their national radio and television stations.

Finally, my delegation welcomes the well-defined coordination between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for carrying out the tasks contained in the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. The United Nations and the OAU should indeed work together in the areas of consultation, the exchange of information and the coordination of joint action, with a view to successfully implementing this Agreement.

We also welcome the understanding between the United Nations and the OAU that each organization will maintain its separate identity in this exercise, including as regards sources of funding, and also that UNMEE will provide, to the extent possible, logistical assistance to the OAU. However, successful peacemaking will depend on the capacity for sustained support and assistance. The OAU must be assisted in mobilizing the necessary financial and logistical

support if it is to be an important player in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-building.

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

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to express our gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Bernard Miyet for presenting the report of the Secretary-General and also for the additional information that he has provided the Security Council.

The Russian delegation has studied this report most carefully, and we are in agreement with its basic contents and conclusions. The report contains detailed proposals for the deployment of a full-scale United Nations peacekeeping operation in the conflict zone, with the cooperation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) as a party supporting the process of negotiation, and it is important that these proposals be based on the 18 June Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, signed in Algiers, and also on the conclusions of the United Nations mission to the region, with which all involved parties cooperated constructively.

We consider the speedy deployment of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), and its later transformation into a full-scale peacekeeping operation, an important precondition for the start of the parties' implementation of the Agreement signed in Algiers. The first practical step in this direction has already been taken. On 31 July the Security Council adopted resolution 1312 (2000), which authorized the dispatch of a group of up to 100 United Nations military observers. Russia, along with other members of the Security Council, is counting on this effort to reinforce the positive developments in the resolution of the territorial disputes between Ethiopia and Eritrea and to provide the United Nations a constructive means to help settle this conflict.

The Russian Federation's basic view is that, with constructive support from the host parties' authorities and also through strict compliance by both Addis Ababa and Asmara with the provisions of the Algiers Agreement, this group of United Nations military observers will be able to help resolve effectively the conflict that divides these two States. The only way to reach a breakthrough in this crisis, as has been confirmed by the positive changes already noted, is through the use of political mechanisms and by staying

within the framework of the standards of international law. We are consistent and focused in our insistence on this kind of approach, both in the Security Council and in contacts with all interested parties.

Given the current situation, it is particularly important that we make sure there are no counterproductive actions, especially any involving the use of armed forces, that might hinder our efforts to normalize the situation in the conflict zone. Both sides, in accordance with the security commitments they have made, must show the maximum restraint and political will and should take steps to establish a climate of mutual trust, with the will to seek a comprehensive solution to the conflict.

The OAU's mediation efforts deserve high praise, as do the efforts of its former Chairman, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria. These efforts resulted in the signing of the Agreement in Algiers. We consider it important that the Security Council continue to offer all its support and encouragement to the efforts to advance the process of political dialogue and to achieve the signing of a conclusive peace agreement between the parties.

We share the views expressed in the Secretary-General's report regarding the serious humanitarian consequences of the conflict, which have led to large-scale population movements and an increase in the need for emergency food aid. The situation is rendered yet more serious by the harsh climatic conditions, the economic difficulties of the region and the landmine dangers in the conflict zone and in neighbouring areas. If we are to tackle these problems effectively, they must be a priority for the international donor community and for the United Nations specialized agencies.

The Russian Federation, as a member of the Security Council and a long-standing friend of the States in the Horn of Africa, will continue its active support for the process of establishing a lasting peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Ethiopia in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance

with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Tessema (Ethiopia) took a seat at the Council table.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report on the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and thank also Under-Secretary-General Miyet for his useful briefing this morning. Your initiative, Mr. President, in convening this open meeting is also very welcome.

My statement today can be relatively short. We fully share the views that will be expressed later in the debate by the delegation of France, which currently holds the Presidency of the European Union.

The fighting between Ethiopia and Eritrea must rank high on any list of totally avoidable conflicts. The cost in human suffering has been enormous, as the Security Council mission to both countries earlier this year saw for itself.

We are particularly grateful for the major contribution, reflected in the Secretary-General's report, of Major-General Timothy Ford and his reconnaissance team. Their findings will form the basis for the essential work, which we hope will begin soon, on expanding the mandate and structure of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE).

The Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, signed in June after much painstaking work by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), is the key to the deployment of UNMEE. The United Kingdom is grateful for the skilful efforts of President Bouteflika of Algeria and the good offices of the special envoy of the United States in bringing this Agreement to fruition. We commend their persistence and welcome their continued involvement. It is clearly essential that the negotiations continue if we are to achieve lasting peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the beginnings of economic revival.

The Secretary-General's account of the humanitarian situation in both countries makes chilling reading. Over 1 million Eritreans have been adversely affected by the war. Over 90,000 of them have sought refuge in the Sudan since May of this year alone. In Ethiopia, the war has exacerbated an already desperate

food shortage. Over 10 million people currently require emergency aid. That is why, for the sake of the peoples of both countries, every effort must continue to be made to achieve a lasting peace settlement. In the meantime, it is clearly essential that both parties to the conflict maintain the ceasefire and adhere precisely and completely to the terms of the Cessation Agreement. That will allow early deployment of an expanded UNMEE.

We hope the 100 military observers foreseen in Security Council resolution 1312 (2000) will deploy soon. It is obviously important that the two sides begin to develop confidence in the sustainability and permanence of the ceasefire. The early arrival of the military observers will greatly assist this process.

But the timely deployment of the full UNMEE peacekeeping force remains the key to a permanent ceasefire and the creation of conditions necessary for work on a lasting settlement. Particular care will be needed to define the time scale of UNMEE's deployment. As Ambassador Soderberg has said this morning, the deployment of United Nations peacekeepers cannot be an excuse for inaction on the political front.

We agree fully with the Secretary-General's concern that UNMEE's peacekeepers should not be expected to deploy indefinitely. It is also important that clear and effective coordinating mechanisms should exist between UNMEE and the OAU as the OAU works to resolve the political differences between the two parties.

The threat posed by landmines and unexploded ordnance to the United Nations Mission and to the return of civilians to those areas affected by the conflict is of grave concern. We welcome the involvement of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and urge both sides to cooperate fully with the UNMAS programme.

The United Kingdom will continue to follow the situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea closely. We urge both sides to maintain the ceasefire and to continue to work for a negotiated, lasting peace agreement. We believe that the swift demarcation and delimitation of the border is a first and vital step towards that goal. It is also imperative that all Governments comply with the mandatory arms embargo and ban on related technical assistance and training imposed by Security Council resolution 1298 (2000). We look forward to beginning

work soon on the draft resolution which will expand UNMEE's mandate.

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

Mr. van Walsum (Netherlands): First let me thank the Secretary-General for his report and Under-Secretary-General Miyet for his briefing on the modalities of a possible United Nations role in the implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities signed by Ethiopia and Eritrea. I join other delegations in commending you, Mr. President, for having convened this open meeting. I also wish to express my delegation's appreciation for the crucial role played by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its Algerian presidency. We welcome the close cooperation envisaged in the report between the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and the OAU.

Obviously, we are also grateful to Ethiopia and Eritrea for having signed the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that to date, the parties have shown the commitment required to ensure the implementation of that Agreement. But implicit in this assessment is the reminder that we are only at the beginning of the peace process. It is the depth of the continuing commitment to real peace on the part of both countries that will determine the success or failure of the operation we are invited to support.

In that respect, we believe that much more can be done. Both countries now have it in their power to take concrete steps to restore confidence in each other. One such step would be to put an end to all mutual recriminations and other forms of propaganda and to start treating each other's nationals in a more decent and humane fashion. The Secretary-General's report contains extensive provisions on UNMEE's public information component, and we are gratified to read that both the Ethiopian and Eritrean authorities have expressed their willingness to provide UNMEE with air time on their national radio and television stations. But that will be effective only if the remaining air time is not clogged with poisonous propaganda against the other country.

We endorse the Secretary-General's appeal to Ethiopia and Eritrea to sustain the political will they have displayed in concluding the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, and it is clear that the real test

of that political will lies in the progress achieved in the proximity talks. It may be inevitable that the Secretary-General's report contains only scant information on this matter, and we also appreciate the constraints of an open Security Council meeting in this respect, but if the Security Council is expected to pronounce itself on the expansion of UNMEE, it will have to know more than what is contained in paragraph 4 of the Secretary-General's report — that is, that during the latest round of proximity talks in Washington “the parties discussed modalities for the delimitation and demarcation of the border and the issue of compensation”.

It is precisely this very brief summary that gives rise to further questions as far as my delegation is concerned. The Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities presupposes that the United Nations peacekeeping operation will terminate with the successful conclusion of the delimitation and demarcation of the border. This seems a logical presumption, as disagreement on the course of the border supposedly was the sole cause of the conflict. But then my delegation would like to know exactly how the question of compensation comes into play. Does a successful conclusion of the delimitation and demarcation of the border hinge on prior agreement on compensation? And what is it that needs to be compensated for? What kind of claims, and whose claims, are we actually talking about? We agree with the Secretary-General that it cannot be expected that UNMEE would be deployed indefinitely, but this is precisely why we feel the Security Council should insist on greater clarity, both with regard to the outstanding issues in the proximity talks and on the extent to which a solution of these issues would be a prerequisite for the termination of UNMEE. Without that information, my delegation would find it difficult to act on the Secretary-General's recommendations. In this connection, it is indeed important that the Secretary-General's special representative will be given observer status at the proximity talks. We hope that his appointment is imminent.

As to the composition of the military component of UNMEE, we welcome the inclusion of a training cell in itself. But recent experience has demonstrated the crucial importance of taking on only well-trained units in United Nations peacekeeping operations. We would be grateful for assurances from the Secretariat that this time only adequately trained and adequately equipped units will be selected.

It is clear that the human cost of the conflict has been huge. As much as peacekeeping is now on our agenda, we should not lose sight of the complex humanitarian operations that are awaiting us. The Secretary-General, rightly in our view, proposes an interface, the civil/military coordination centre, to align peacekeeping tasks and activities with those of the humanitarian organizations. We hope that in its future reports to the Council the Secretariat will continue to include a substantive humanitarian segment, including references to vulnerable categories of persons, such as Eritreans previously expelled from Ethiopia and Ethiopians who are to be repatriated to Ethiopia.

Our relief over the present positive outlook for peace should not make us oblivious to the fact that on 17 May the Council adopted resolution 1298 (2000) imposing an arms embargo on the parties. So long as a final peace agreement has not been concluded, the international community should remain vigilant to ensure that the current peace process is not endangered by illegal arms supplies. Paragraph 12 of that resolution requests United Nations bodies and other organizations and interested parties to report to the sanctions Committee on violations of the measures concerned. We would like to know whether UNMEE is supposed to report on possible violations of sanctions wherever they come to its knowledge.

In conclusion, let me stress again the importance of the attitude of the parties themselves. Both countries face a deplorable economic situation which would greatly benefit from rapid demobilization and demilitarization. Both Governments should now focus on development. They owe that to their peoples, who have been led to the slaughter for no good reason, and certainly with no results to boast of. This was a war that neither country could afford and that should never have taken place.

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

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): This meeting of the Security Council is of great importance to the process of peace in the Horn of Africa, and particularly in the countries that are our focus today, Eritrea and Ethiopia. It is a timely response to the commitments made by those two countries in signing the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, in Algiers on 18 June 2000. Our discussion in open forum today provides us with an opportunity to give expression to the political will

of the international community in support of the peace process that is currently under way. It also provides us with an opportunity to speak openly to both parties and to impress upon them the importance of their own commitments to peace and to reducing the human suffering visited upon their peoples by natural disaster and by the conflict between them, which we believe could have been avoided. It further gives us an opportunity to hear directly from them.

We join in thanking Mr. Bernard Miyet, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for introducing the Secretary-General's report (S/2000/785) and for updating us on the issues before us. My delegation also wishes to state how pleased it is by the Secretary-General's report, not only for its important update on political and humanitarian developments but also because it sets out in specific detail the framework for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). This is especially important for the Security Council when considering the Secretary-General's recommendations, and it will guide us in our decision-making process.

My delegation commends President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for their determined and sustained efforts in negotiating the Agreement, and we fully support the OAU's continued role in seeking to achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace for both countries.

Jamaica is extremely concerned about the chronic humanitarian situation in both Ethiopia and Eritrea. The future of the peoples of both countries is tied to a comprehensive resolution of the dispute between them. The abatement and ultimate elimination of the human suffering, which has been exacerbated by the conflict, require the cooperation of all concerned, and the international community must respond to ameliorate the effects of this human tragedy.

The Secretary-General's report sets out in great detail the humanitarian situation and what needs to be done. My delegation supports his recommendations and calls upon the international community to respond accordingly.

My delegation is pleased at the deployment of United Nations military observers, which has begun, pursuant to resolution 1312 (2000), which we adopted on 31 July, authorizing the establishment of UNMEE. My delegation will examine the nine specific elements of the Secretary-General's recommendations on the

expanded mandate of UNMEE for its full deployment under phase three. It cannot be overemphasized how important it is for the Security Council to get it right. The lives and future of millions of Ethiopians and Eritreans are dependent on this.

The message that goes out from this Chamber today must be clear and unequivocal. The international community is prepared to fully support the peace process between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The cooperation of both parties is vitally important in all phases of the process. As stated in paragraph 51 of the Secretary-General's report, in the end it is only the parties – Eritrea and Ethiopia – themselves who can bring lasting peace to their countries. In order to do this they must commit themselves to continue pursuing the negotiations they have started on the outstanding issues, under the auspices of the OAU, in order to reach a final settlement on the modalities for the delimitation and demarcation of their common borders and on other outstanding issues.

The future of their countries and of their peoples depends on this.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We wish first of all to express our gratitude for the 9 August 2000 report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2000/785), and for Mr. Miyet's update at this formal meeting of the Security Council. As we have noted on other occasions, we believe that the format selected for this meeting makes for the greatest possible transparency in our work.

The Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities signed by Ethiopia and Eritrea in Algiers on 18 June 2000, which was achieved thanks to the tireless efforts of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) through President Bouteflika, to whom we reiterate our gratitude, was a key step towards restoring peace in a conflict that has gone on too long and that has cost too many lives.

But the signing of the Agreement was a first step. Much remains to be done, and it needs to be done as quickly as possible in order to secure a peace that has carried a high price. The United Nations will have a fundamental role to play in this connection.

The signatories to the Algiers Agreement requested the presence of the United Nations, whose forces should be dispatched to the field without further delay so as to ensure the withdrawal of troops from the

front and the maintenance of the ceasefire. Time is of the essence in this regard.

We should bear in mind that this is a classic operation of keeping the peace between two regular armies, as distinct from some other operations that have been undertaken in Africa by the United Nations. In his report of 9 August, the Secretary-General proposes a clear-cut mandate that is in keeping with the nature of the operation ahead of us. We support his conclusions and we again express our willingness to work with the requisite urgency.

With regard to the Mission itself, we would like to highlight the following points that seem important to us. The Mission should have a single chain of command. The mandate should have a clear and precise time limit in order to prevent its indefinite extension. We support the Secretary-General's suggestion for phased deployment.

Moreover, we believe that the point made in the report about the need for both parties fully to guarantee the freedom of movement and security of United Nations personnel is fundamental. Without such a guarantee it will not be possible for the Mission to carry out the tasks assigned to it.

In regard to the last point, it will be vital to move forward quickly in the task of demining in the Mission's area of deployment. We consider the mine clearance component a priority, as does the report.

We should not fail to place on the record our concern over the serious humanitarian situation afflicting Eritrea and Ethiopia. The report is very clear in that regard. The international community should mobilize all possible assistance to alleviate the effects of this crisis. To that end, coordination of assistance with the humanitarian community will be a priority task that the United Nations Mission will have to undertake.

When they signed the Algiers Agreement, Eritrea and Ethiopia indicated their readiness to arrive at a negotiated solution to the conflict. But if peace is to be consolidated both countries must act with the greatest restraint and caution, so as to create an atmosphere conducive to dialogue. Prompt implementation of the ceasefire Agreement naturally concerns the United Nations, but it is also a task for which the parties to the conflict are primarily responsible. Without their active cooperation little can be achieved.

Mr. Kasse (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I would like to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for your initiative to hold this open meeting of the Security Council to discuss Ethiopia and Eritrea. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report of 9 August 2000, and to offer my thanks to Mr. Bernard Miyet for his introductory remarks concerning the report.

Mali welcomes the signing by Ethiopia and Eritrea on 18 June 2000 of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. Mali supports the continuation of negotiations on outstanding issues under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), as well as the efforts made by the United States and the European Union to find a comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict.

As the basis of a negotiated solution acceptable to both parties, the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities is today a consensual and comprehensive instrument that opens the door to lasting political settlement of the conflict.

My delegation follows with great interest the ongoing negotiations to resolve outstanding issues, and we call upon the two parties to achieve quickly an agreement leading to the restoration of peace. In this regard, we welcome the decision taken by the heads of State or Government of the OAU to ask President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to continue his efforts.

The report before us today gives a good overview of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). My delegation welcomes the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report, as well as the Security Council's adoption of resolution 1312 (2000), of 31 July 2000. We hope very soon to see the deployment of military observers and other authorized civilian support staff. That deployment will of course take place during the various phases of the operation. We welcome the mandate and concept of operations of UNMEE's various components, as well as the proposed mechanism of cooperation with the OAU described in the report of the Secretary-General.

My delegation is very concerned about the tragic humanitarian situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea. In this respect, we call upon the international community to respond positively to the humanitarian appeal so that the refugees can return before the rainy season begins. We also invite the two parties to cooperate fully so that

the temporary security zone can be clearly delimited to make possible the beginning of mine clearance.

Finally, we call upon all parties to cooperate with the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity and to continue indirect negotiations in order to achieve a comprehensive and lasting solution to the conflict.

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

Mr. Chen Xu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for submitting to us his report on the question of Ethiopia and Eritrea. We would also like to thank Mr. Miyet for the briefing he has just given us. We also wish to thank the President and the Malaysian delegation for arranging this open meeting.

As other delegations have done before us, we would very much like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its former Chairman, the President of Algeria, for all they efforts they have made to promote reconciliation between these two countries.

Since 18 June 2000, when Ethiopia and Eritrea signed the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities mediated by the OAU, both countries have succeeded in exercising restraint, and relative peace and tranquillity have prevailed in the border region. At the same time, the two countries have begun a new round of indirect talks under the auspices of the OAU on the question of delimitation of the border and compensation. The momentum for political resolution of the conflict has led to new progress. Under these circumstances, the active involvement and energetic support of the international community, and particularly of the United Nations, are of crucial importance.

We are happy to note that last month the Security Council adopted resolution 1312 (2000), on the establishment of UNMEE. Today we have received a report from the Secretary-General on increasing the number of Mission personnel and expanding its mandate. The Chinese delegation has noted with appreciation that prior to submitting this report, the Secretary-General sent a reconnaissance mission to engage in field survey and research and to hold consultations and act in coordination with the Ethiopian and Eritrean Governments and the OAU. We

hope the recommendations contained in the report are clear and concrete and that they constitute a good framework.

The effective implementation of these recommendations will facilitate the course of reconciliation and an early political settlement of the dispute between these two countries, as well as peace and stability throughout the Horn of Africa. The Chinese delegation takes a positive attitude towards these goals. We hope the Security Council, on the basis of consultations held with the Ethiopian and Eritrean Governments and the OAU, will take early action on the basis of the Secretary-General's recommendations and formally decide on the number of Mission personnel and its mandate. The Chinese delegation will actively participate in the relevant discussions and consultations and will submit its views.

At the same time, we hope the Secretariat will engage in early research on possible sources of troops and resources, and will launch, as early as possible, relevant preparatory work.

The Chinese delegation is also deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in both Ethiopia and Eritrea. We appreciate the work done by relevant United Nations organizations in this regard. We call on the international community to step up its involvement on the basis of its current work and to contribute even more towards alleviating the humanitarian crisis in these two countries.

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

Ms. Achouri (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting, and to thank Mr. Bernard Miyet for his introduction of the Secretary-General's report before us. In this regard, allow me to express my delegation's satisfaction with the clarity of the proposals contained in this report on the suggested structure and concept of operations for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his diligence in planning this Mission, which, we are confident, will have a very positive effect in normalizing the situation between the two countries concerned and will help ensure conditions favourable to the establishment of lasting peace in the region.

My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express once again its deep appreciation for the positive attitude of the two parties, as shown by their commitment to constructive means of settling their dispute. By signing the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, the two parties have demonstrated they are resolved to secure by peaceful means a lasting peace, which will guarantee the peoples of the two countries the conditions necessary for their well-being. This quest for peace should be encouraged and promoted by all parties concerned, in particular by the Security Council, which has played an active role in the effort to bring about a peaceful settlement to the dispute.

The relevant proposals presented by the Secretary-General in this regard, which we fully endorse, call for diligent action on the part of the Council in order to speed up the implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and thus facilitate the rapid conclusion of a comprehensive and final agreement between the two parties. The Council should also authorize, as early as possible, the expansion of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea and its deployment to the region.

In this respect, we encourage the two parties to maintain their positive attitude by cooperating fully with the United Nations Mission and to continue proximity talks in a sustained manner under United Nations auspices on the subject of border demarcation and delimitation. Moreover, we welcome the coordination mechanism established between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which will likely enhance the effectiveness of their respective endeavours in assisting these two countries to implement the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and prepare the way for a lasting settlement of the dispute.

The deployment of the expanded United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea is vitally important in terms of promoting the comprehensive and lasting peaceful settlement of the dispute between the two parties, which we are all most anxious to see.

Thus, we must make available to the Mission all the means it requires to do its job effectively. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the fact that the Secretary-General has provided for a mine action assistance programme and the establishment of a demining coordination centre at UNMEE headquarters. We believe this programme must be implemented as a

priority, given the danger the presence of mines poses to the civilian population and the obstacles it will pose to the deployment and proper operation of the Mission.

Finally, I wish to conclude by emphasizing that the peace process that has been undertaken cannot fully succeed unless the humanitarian situation in the two countries is not immediately redressed. Therefore, it is incumbent on the international community to show solidarity with the peoples of Ethiopia and Eritrea by providing the assistance required, particularly financial assistance, in order to cope with the acute humanitarian needs described in the Secretary-General's report, which call for urgent action.

The President: I thank the representative of Tunisia for her kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Kuchynski (Ukraine): First I wish to join previous speakers in thanking Under-Secretary-General Miyet for his introduction of the Secretary-General's latest report on the situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea. We think the report is quite informative and can serve as a useful tool for the further preparation of the deployment of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) under Security Council resolution 1312 (2000). As for the UNMEE mandate proposed in the resolution, and the structure and concept of a peacekeeping mission, we would like to note that the Secretary-General's report comprehensively and competently deals with all the related aspects. We fully agree with the observations and recommendations contained therein.

As for the political situation in the region, we welcome the decision of the thirty-sixth ordinary session of the OAU heads of State and Government, held in early July in Lomé, to call upon the parties to continue, under the auspices of the OAU, their negotiations on the outstanding issues with a view to establishing lasting peace. In this connection, we would like to stress that we are somewhat concerned about the fact that the latest round of proximity talks between the parties, held early in July in Washington, D.C., was suspended and no official statement on the results of the discussions was made.

It is my delegation's hope that the talks between the parties will resume without delay, and we call upon them to exercise restraint and to abstain from any provocative actions in fulfilling their obligations under the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities of 18 June 2000, as well as to cooperate fully with the United

Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea in the context of the implementation of its mandate.

In this connection, we consider it logical to take into account the views of the parties so that the United Nations peacekeeping operation could be terminated, hopefully after the successful completion of the border delimitation and demarcation process, because, as stated in the report, UNMEE cannot remain deployed indefinitely.

My delegation believes that one of the most important components of the United Nations peacekeeping operation in the region is mine action, and that it is not accidental that this issue figures so prominently in the Secretary-General's report. Given the fact that today there are numerous landmines and a great deal of unexploded ordnance in the conflict zone, especially in the "no man's land", and that neither party has adequate technical resources to conduct the mine action operation, this situation creates a direct threat to the safe deployment and functioning of the peacekeeping Mission, as well as to the local population and to efforts to provide humanitarian assistance to them. In this context, we are seriously counting on the efficient work of the mine action coordination centre that is being established in UNMEE headquarters.

My delegation believes that it would be useful for the Security Council to study the findings of the multidisciplinary reconnaissance mission headed by Major-General Ford, which visited the region from 4 to 18 July. It may be expedient to invite him to brief the Security Council on his views on the situation on the ground.

We are extremely concerned about humanitarian conditions in the region. The refugee situation in both Eritrea and Ethiopia remains extremely serious. A positive step in this context is undoubtedly the signing by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Governments of Eritrea and the Sudan of a tripartite agreement on the voluntary repatriation of Eritrean refugees.

Finally, I want to reiterate our support for the observations and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General. We share the view that a lasting peace can be ultimately established only by the parties themselves, and that UNMEE and all other

United Nations entities present in these countries are only an initial instrument in achieving the peace.

Mr. Duval (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to thank Mr. Miyet for introducing the Secretary-General's report and to express Canada's support for the recommendations contained in the report concerning the mandate and expanded structure of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE).

We believe that the Security Council can make a further contribution to the commendable diplomatic efforts that have been deployed in the settlement of this conflict, including those of the Organization of African Unity, the Government of Algeria and President Bouteflika, the European Union and the United States, all of which we would like to thank.

Diplomacy has played its role in an effective manner. It is now up to the Security Council to consolidate the gains achieved through the rapid deployment of an effective United Nations presence that would ensure, through a clear-sighted and achievable mandate, not only the continued suspension of hostilities but also the necessary conditions for a lasting peace. We associate ourselves with the statements made by the representatives of the Netherlands and Argentina in this respect.

Canada considers that this Mission will provide the United Nations with the opportunity to demonstrate its peacekeeping capabilities. We believe that the Secretary-General's report is particularly persuasive because of its very thoughtful and detailed nature, which clearly was helpful in the elaboration of the recommendations.

We would also like to thank those who participated in the reconnaissance mission that took place from 4 to 18 July and to take note of their work, which made it possible to elaborate the framework for a complete and integrated mission. We believe that this kind of evaluation mission should be sent before each peacekeeping operation and that, whenever possible, representatives of such missions should be present during deliberations of the Security Council aimed at elaborating new mandates.

(*spoke in English*)

The positive nature of UNMEE's evolution to this point should not, however, obscure the continuing need for increased capacity and authority within the

Department of Peacekeeping Operations to conduct early contingency planning and liaison deployment ahead of Security Council authorization. This is an essential element of efforts by Canada and others to enhance the United Nations ability to respond in a timely, effective and appropriate manner to emerging peacekeeping requirements.

The complex needs of the situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea will require a substantial deployment of our collective political, humanitarian, security and development resources. We should nevertheless make a virtue out of necessity and value the integrated structure of UNMEE as the most effective way of addressing these needs.

The participation of the Organization of African Unity is most welcome, given its continuing role as a champion of the agreements between the parties. The presence of public information and mine action units will make an important contribution to protecting citizens from fear and from harm.

Finally, the establishment of a coordination mechanism with humanitarian organizations, including, perhaps, a dedicated humanitarian coordinator within the mission, will allow aid workers to operate more effectively and in safer conditions.

We are laying the groundwork for a successful mission. Ultimately, however, the burden of success or failure rests on Ethiopia and Eritrea. We are duty-bound to end a needless conflict that has killed more than 100,000 and endangered millions. There are encouraging signs in this regard, including Eritrea's signature of the Geneva Convention on 7 August. This important step is a reminder of the fundamental obligation in the area of international humanitarian and human rights law that Ethiopia and Eritrea must acquit themselves of, most notably with respect to access to prisoners of war, the return of displaced persons and the promotion and protection of human rights.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): We support the Secretary-General's proposal, as contained in his 9 August report, asking authorization for a military force of up to 4,200 personnel for the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) to assist in the implementation of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. The structure and concept of the operations are based on good political and military assessments. This will allow us to move forward, as envisaged in Security Council resolution 1312 (2000).

We welcome the inclusion of an elaborate public information component. Council members and the broader membership have been putting emphasis on this aspect as an element of lessons learned, particularly in Sierra Leone. The Governments of Ethiopia and Eritrea deserve our appreciation for agreeing to provide airtime on national radio and television to UNMEE for public information broadcasts.

We also note with appreciation the importance the Secretary-General has attached to coordination with the humanitarian community, as well as on civil-military coordination. A mission that is planned in keeping with the elements contained in relevant Council resolutions and presidential statements – including those relating to the protection of civilians and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process – will certainly mark a significant improvement in United Nations peacekeeping.

Of particular importance is the coordination with the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which is a guarantor of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. We endorse the coordination mechanism proposed by the Secretary-General and hope that the OAU will ensure effective coordination and consultations with the United Nations representatives.

At the Lomé summit meeting of the OAU, the heads of State and Government called for a speedy deployment of the United Nations Mission. We believe that the Council should give its authorization as soon as possible. At the same time, it is important that the Secretariat should complete the mission planning process for an early deployment. Bangladesh stands ready to participate in UNMEE.

I would like to pay tribute to President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria and express my deep appreciation to the OAU high-level delegation for their contribution to the conclusion of the Agreement between the two countries. We call upon the Governments of the two countries to exercise the utmost restraint and ensure full respect for the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. Their cooperation with the United Nations will be critically important in the authorization, deployment and operation of UNMEE.

The international community needs to respond more attentively to the immediate humanitarian needs of the war-affected peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Special attention and assistance should be given to the drought-stricken population in Ethiopia. We call upon the donor community to come forward with greater generosity in response to the July 2000 revised appeal, which calls for \$87.3 million in relief aid, required by the eight United Nations agencies.

UNMEE should be able to complete its mission early; however, this will depend on the conclusion of a peaceful, definitive settlement of the conflict. The two parties should use the proximity talks responsibly so as to fulfil their commitment to reach such a settlement. Meanwhile, the international community should ensure full respect for the arms embargo imposed by Council resolution 1298 (2000).

The international community should be able to devote its attention and resources to the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in the two countries. The priority, once the territorial disputes are resolved, should quickly be shifted to people and their development.

We call upon Ethiopia and Eritrea – fellow members of the Non-Aligned Movement – to make serious efforts to achieve an early implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. We encourage them to go beyond the bonds of friendship and cooperation. They are two neighbours with a long-shared history. We wish to see them as two friendly, prosperous people in the comity of nations.

The President: I will now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Malaysia.

My delegation would like to join previous speakers in thanking Under-Secretary-General Miyet for the informative update and for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea. My delegation would also like to commend President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) high-level delegation for their tireless efforts, which led to the signing of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea on 18 June 2000. We hope that this will be the all-important first step towards the restoration of peace between the two neighbouring countries. We also commend the support provided by the United States and the European Union for the mediation efforts.

The Council now has the responsibility to assist the two countries in creating conditions for lasting

peace and stability between them. We have to act quickly and decisively, and we should not allow the momentum to flag. In this regard, the adoption of resolution 1312 (2000) of 31 July, which authorized the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), was the first critical step.

We note that the Secretary-General in his latest report has furnished the Council with the findings of the reconnaissance mission and has provided a concept of operations and recommendations for the expansion of UNMEE. We support the three-phase approach outlined for UNMEE. We welcome the early dispatch of liaison officers to both capitals.

My delegation will participate constructively in Council consideration of the proposed expansion of UNMEE's mandate, as well as of its personnel, as described in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report. In so doing, we will continue to stress the importance of matching the number of personnel with the tasks assigned to them, in order to ensure a successful implementation of the mandate. We should draw lessons from our peacekeeping experiences in other parts of Africa and ensure that UNMEE will have efficient and effective communications and well-trained and well-equipped personnel to ensure its success.

We also look forward to the appointment of a special representative to head UNMEE. Equally important is the need to maintain close contacts and cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU and the political and military leadership of both countries.

My delegation is concerned that the continued presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance may affect UNMEE's early and safe deployment as well as the return of displaced persons. We therefore support the Secretary-General's proposal that, with assistance from military personnel from both Ethiopia and Eritrea in the mine-clearing exercise, the mine action coordination centre undertake an early and rapid survey of the area of the temporary security zone. We expect the full cooperation and assistance of the two countries in this important and urgent task.

My delegation also hopes that together with the early deployment of an expanded UNMEE, the dire humanitarian situation will improve. The populations of both countries, which have been devastated by the

two-year war, should be spared further hardship, especially from the effects of the severe food shortages resulting from earlier prolonged droughts. The international community must urgently assist the two countries with much-needed humanitarian assistance as well in meeting their rehabilitation and reconstruction needs.

Malaysia commends the parties' continued commitment to the implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. We urge them to continue the proximity talks, with the goal of reaching an early agreement on the modalities to pave the way for the rapid delimitation and demarcation of their common border. They should realize that the United Nations presence on the ground will not be there indefinitely, nor will it resolve the conflict between them. They will have to abide by the ceasefire Agreement, scrupulously observe the arms embargo imposed on them by Council resolution 1298 (2000), manifest the necessary political will to find a lasting political settlement to their territorial dispute and repair their ruptured bilateral relations. They must help the United Nations and the OAU to help them find the peace that has eluded them. The future of their countries lies in their own hands.

Finally, in my other capacity, as Chairman of the Sanctions Committee established by resolution 1298 (2000), I associate myself with the question posed by the representative of the Netherlands as to whether UNMEE is also expected to report about possible violations of resolution 1298 (2000).

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this statement.

This open debate that you, Mr. President, have been good enough to organize – a debate open to all members of the United Nations – is an opportunity to consider the recent report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea. I would like to thank Mr. Bernard Miyet for having given us an oral introduction to that report.

On behalf of the European Union, I wish to make a few brief comments on the report. The first concerns

the recommendations made by the Secretary-General. The European Union is glad to welcome the recommendations for the enlargement of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). The proposals made concerning the Mission's mandate, its structure and its concept of operations seem to us to be a good basis to implement the peace settlement and to supervise the redeployment provided for in the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities.

Secondly, regarding the role of Ethiopia and Eritrea, we welcome the statement in paragraph 50 of the Secretary-General's report that "To date, the parties have shown the commitment required to ensure the implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities." We welcome this climate of cooperation. We call on Ethiopia and Eritrea to continue their endeavours to secure lasting peace.

We take note of the proximity talks held in July in Washington, and we would ask the two parties to resume their discussions as early as possible, with a view to arriving at a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the conflict.

We call on the parties to continue to cooperate with the United Nations Mission, in particular so as to ensure freedom of movement for United Nations personnel entrusted with peacekeeping. As the Secretary-General notes, it is also necessary for Ethiopia and Eritrea to provide the United Nations Mission with all information available to them about the areas in which mines or unexploded ordnance are known or suspected to be present.

Thirdly, concerning cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the European Union intends to lend its support to the measures taken by the OAU and the United Nations, working in coordination, to implement the peace settlement.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the endeavours of President Bouteflika and the high-level OAU delegation, thanks to which it was possible to sign the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities in Algiers in June. The European Union, which was represented at the Algiers talks by Mr. Rino Serri, the Italian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Personal Envoy of the Presidency of the European Union, expresses its full support for the OAU's activities. The European Union encourages the OAU to continue its endeavours to bring about an early

resumption of talks between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It welcomes the cooperation established between the United Nations and the African organization.

Fourthly, I would like to comment on the humanitarian situation. The populations of Ethiopia and Eritrea have suffered greatly from the conflict between the two countries. Drought has added to their difficulties. The European Union is striving to provide assistance to tackle these serious difficulties. The Union is particularly troubled by the large number of internally displaced persons and refugees in the region. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea must establish and maintain close cooperation with humanitarian actors in the region.

The Secretary-General has presented us with recommendations for the expansion of the mandate and format of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is our hope that the Security Council will take action as quickly as possible on these recommendations so that the peacekeeping operation may be set up as early as possible.

For its part, the European Union supports the deployment of international observers. It is also ready to lend support to the work of delimitation and demarcation of borders, mine clearance and activities taken to assist refugees and displaced persons.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Japan, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kobayashi (Japan): At the outset, on behalf of the delegation of Japan, I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity to participate in this meeting on the situation in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Japan has been closely following this conflict and welcomes the decision which the two countries made on 18 June to lay down their arms and sign the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. The Agreement was greatly facilitated by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), particularly by Algeria in its mediating role as Chair, as well as by the United States and the European Union. Japan pays high tribute to all of them for their tireless efforts. Since we have dispatched our State Secretary and other senior officials of the Foreign Ministry to both countries in an effort to find a peaceful solution to the conflict, Japan is all the more gratified by the cessation of hostilities.

The second phase of the proximity talks on the implementation of the ceasefire Agreement, sponsored by the United States Government, started in July in Washington, D.C. In this connection, my Government would like to emphasize the following two points: first, Ethiopia and Eritrea are requested by Security Council resolution 1312 (2000) to quickly agree on the deployment of mine action experts. Because demining is a precondition for the deployment of a peacekeeping mission for the re-establishment of civilian administration and the return of displaced persons, a decision on this issue should be made as soon as possible. In this regard, Japan is considering the possibility of making a financial contribution for mine action conducted by the United Nations in this area.

Secondly, the parties should resolve, once and for all, their dispute over the delimitation and demarcation of their common border, in accordance with the OAU Framework Agreement and the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. The resolution of the border issue should not remain inconclusive, since it has been a cause of this conflict, and it could provoke hostilities again.

Japan hopes that the peace talks will soon be successfully concluded. Japan is also of the view that the preparations for establishing a United Nations peacekeeping operation need to be completed quickly, and peacekeepers should be deployed as soon as possible in order to ensure the implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities.

Looking ahead, the two countries will have to confront a wide range of problems in the aftermath of the conflict, such as those relating to landmines, refugees and internally displaced persons, not to mention the daunting task of reconstruction and development. Before the conflict broke out, Japan had been one of the largest donors to both countries, having extended assistance to Ethiopia and Eritrea in the areas of agricultural production, social and industrial infrastructure and human resource development. Its assistance to Ethiopia ranged from \$37 million to \$63 million a year during the period 1995-1997. It provided assistance to Eritrea for the first time in 1993, and in 1997 it had quickly become the second-largest donor to that country. I might add that last year Japan contributed \$4.9 million through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as well as about \$1 million through the World Food

Programme to mitigate the suffering of those in desperate need in the region.

Upon the faithful implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities and the realization of peace between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Japan, in cooperation with the international community, is determined to extend as much assistance as possible to both countries.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Brattskar (Norway): Norway welcomes this opportunity to address the Security Council regarding the situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Norwegian Government strongly supports Council resolution 1312 (2000), which authorized the establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping mission in the two countries. The United Nations operation will be a crucial element in the international community's efforts to create a stable security environment in the Horn of Africa. For the operation to succeed, it is important that all Members of the United Nations take responsibility in that regard. While recognizing that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and regional actors have taken the leading role, we too want to play our part in these common efforts. We are therefore prepared to contribute military observers to the operation.

Norway very much welcomes the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities signed by the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the State of Eritrea, and we believe that it constitutes an important step towards a comprehensive and lasting peace agreement. The Organization of African Unity deserves credit for the great efforts it has made to facilitate a solution to the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We are also grateful to the former Chairman of that organization, Algeria, for its willingness to continue its role in further enhancing the peace process. My Government has for many years been a strong supporter of the work of the OAU and continues to provide financial support to that organization. We especially appreciate the OAU's emphasis on conflict prevention.

Norway has also contributed \$1 million to the United Nations special fund for assistance in the delimitation and demarcation of the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea. I am pleased also to be able to

mention that Norway last week decided to provide \$225,000 to the United Nations Mine Action Service mine action programme in Ethiopia and Eritrea. Furthermore, Norway has allocated humanitarian assistance worth about \$30 million to the Horn of Africa so far this year.

It is, however, imperative that both Ethiopia and Eritrea fully respect the ceasefire agreement and honour their commitments so that the agreement may lead to a comprehensive peace settlement in the region. For this to materialize, both countries must refrain from any actions that could be interpreted as provocations or as violations of the ceasefire. We would like to stress the need for continued talks between the two countries on all unresolved issues. Effective implementation of the ceasefire agreement, with the assistance of the good offices of the OAU and of the United Nations, should give us hope for the restoration of normal relations between the two countries as soon as possible, to the benefit of the peoples concerned and of the region as a whole.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Eritrea, on whom I now call.

Mr. Seyoum (Eritrea): I am grateful to you, Mr. President, and to all the other members of the Security Council for this opportunity for delegation to participate in today's open discussion on the agenda item before the Council, "The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia".

Today the Council is considering the report of the Secretary-General dated 9 August 2000, document S/2000/785. At the outset, my delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for the meaningful report that is before the Council. I wish also to seize the occasion to thank him for his report of 30 June 2000, document S/2000/643.

I am very grateful for the statements made by all members of the Council, and by the representatives of Japan and of Norway. My delegation has taken note of all of them with great interest. My delegation assures the Council that Eritrea will remain committed to all agreements reached thus far and to those to come in the future between my country, Eritrea, and Ethiopia.

The Council is considering the report of the Secretary-General at a time when a vast portion of the sovereign territory of the State of Eritrea has been invaded and has been occupied by neighbouring

Ethiopia with impunity since last May. This act of invasion in the pursuit of territorial claims is, of course, a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, of the charter of the Organization of African Unity and of international law. The Council is meeting today at a time when more than a million members of Eritrea's population are internally displaced, and when some 95,000 others have fled to neighbouring Sudan as a result of Ethiopia's invasion, which was aimed at destroying the small nation of Eritrea and the dignity of its people.

Since the invasion, men, women and children have been living in tents, caves and valleys; during the coming rainy season, they will be exposed to illnesses of all kinds. With reference to the return of refugees from the Sudan, the report states that,

“even in the best-case scenario, immediate return for many is impossible as a result of the destruction of homes, basic infrastructure, loss of crops and household assets, lack of social services and the presence of landmines.”
(S/2000/785, para. 6)

If we add the 71,000 persons who have been inhumanely deported from Ethiopia, who are omitted from the report, and the 335,000 drought-affected people, whose poor living conditions have been exacerbated by the war, we are looking at a serious short-term and long-term humanitarian problem in a country with a population of about 4 million.

As I speak, I know that so many children are going to bed hungry. Therefore, I cannot help but bring this to the attention of the Council. The Government and the people of Eritrea are very grateful for the assistance we have received thus far from the international donor community, but this is far from meeting our needs. We are particularly grateful to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for making the Council aware of the humanitarian situation from time to time, and for its coordination with the World Food Programme in reaching out to the needy with emergency food supplies.

I should also add that the Council is meeting at a time when a good number of the members of the population of the Eritrean territories currently under Ethiopian occupation are living in the worst imaginable human-rights conditions. Rampant rape of under-age girls and adult women, including women as old as 60

years of age; the abduction of boys; the separation and disappearance of family members; and the stealing and killing of livestock: these are everyday events in the occupied territories. As the Council meets today, the vandalism of hotels and other private business, the robbing of priceless holy treasures from churches and mosques and the destruction of buildings of public institutions and other crucial infrastructure with explosives continue unabated. The list of such crimes is long, but I do not wish to go into details at this time, because they will be adequately addressed in other United Nations forums.

In view of what I have said, and in the interest of genuine peace, my delegation, on behalf of the Government and the people of Eritrea, welcomes the report of the Secretary-General that is before the Council today. I would be remiss if I did not use this opportunity to thank the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, whose staff worked very hard to expedite the production of the report. The Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Hédi Annabi, and his team in the Office of Operations have done a commendable job in that regard. We are grateful to Mr. Annabi for briefing my delegation before the report was published.

While we do not have very much to comment on in the report because of its being mostly of a technical nature, I would like to say that my delegation would have wished to see a balanced text on the humanitarian developments described in section III. My delegation has observed that the reporting is not parallel for the two countries. We consider significant the report's omission of mention of the 71,000 Eritreans and Ethiopians of Eritrean origin that have been expelled from Ethiopia, of civilian casualties and of the deliberate destruction of economic and social infrastructure by the Ethiopian army.

The Secretary-General has made a novel and meaningful proposal to the Security Council in paragraph 48 of his report. The Government and people of Eritrea fully support the proposal. The expansion of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), which I would be tempted to call “you and me”, is critical to the ongoing peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia. I therefore appeal to the Council to adopt the report's proposals, including the proposal contained in paragraph 48.

My delegation knows that the Secretary-General is making serious efforts to bring lasting peace to our

troubled region. The peoples of Eritrea and Ethiopia are now looking to the Security Council for a swift decision and the effective and speedy implementation of the Mission. I fervently hope that the Council will not fail them.

In the fragile situation we now have, I cannot emphasize enough the fact that speed is of paramount importance. The implementation of phase three of UNMEE, which is the deployment of the full peacekeeping operation, ought to be expedited. The Government and the people of Eritrea are grateful for the Council's adoption of resolution 1312 (2000), of 31 July 2000, which led to the establishment of UNMEE.

In the same vein, our appreciation also goes to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, and OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim for their continued efforts for peace in our region. We are also grateful for the helping hands of the United States and the European Union, working as partners in this venture.

In conclusion, I wish to say that the Government and the people of Eritrea look forward to warmly welcoming the members of UNMEE to Eritrea. On behalf of my Government, I pledge full cooperation in support of the success of UNMEE's expressed objectives. I appeal once again for speedy adoption of the proposals before us.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ethiopia, on whom I now call.

Mr. Tessema (Ethiopia): May I express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to other members of the Council, for this open debate on the report of the Secretary-General on the establishment of a peacekeeping force for the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We are indeed grateful to the Secretary-General for the timely report he has provided us. We hope the Security Council will act sooner rather than later in authorizing and deploying the peacekeeping force.

During this morning's discussion much has been said as to how it would have been possible to avoid this costly war fought between my country and Eritrea — so much so that it is almost as if we had chosen to go to war just because we wanted to do so. We share the view that the war should not have happened. However, we differ from others in determining who is to blame

for starting and carrying out that war of aggression. In this regard, our conscience is clear. Not only were we victims of blatant aggression, but our Government and people also made their best effort to end it peacefully. We need not remind some Council members of our plight for upholding international action against a blatant war of aggression committed by our neighbour, Eritrea.

Since the signing at Algiers of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, on 18 June 2000, we have, for our part, continued strictly to adhere to the Agreement in both spirit and deed. Unfortunately, even at this stage we are again not lucky enough to have a partner. It is in this regard that the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities also calls upon both parties to have a sense of coolness, to slow down all negative propaganda and to place on hold all actions that were done before the war. Unfortunately, once again thousands of women and children are being deported from Eritrea to Ethiopia under inhumane and harsh conditions, as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has reported. Two days after the signing of the Agreement, 10,000 Ethiopians were deported from Eritrea. To this day, the ICRC has not visited a single prisoner of war in Eritrea. This does not contribute to confidence-building measures.

On the Secretary-General's report, I must apologize: I was not fortunate enough to hear the briefing by Under-Secretary-General Miyet. Nevertheless, we have read the report carefully and have consulted with the Secretariat on some aspects of it. We are glad to note that the main tenets of the Secretary-General's report are to our satisfaction. The core issue of mandate has been fully reflective of the elements of the Algiers Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities. The size of the Mission, as well as other logistical issues, are acceptable. Of course, other issues that are of a detailed nature and that will come up in the day-to-day running of the peacekeeping operation need to be worked out in further consultations. Having said this, we want to reiterate our full commitment to, and cooperation with, the United Nations in this regard.

As to the allegations against my country made by the representative of Eritrea, unfortunately this has been the experience of my Government for the last two and a half years. It is simply a blatant lie, characteristic of the Government of Eritrea, to bring the issue of refugees forward as if it had happened today and as if

Ethiopia were responsible for it. We will not respond to it; it does not merit a response.

May I remind the representative of Eritrea that while the situation in Eritrea is indeed a desperate and destitute one, my Government has no responsibility for its taking place.

In addition, we gave our word to the mediators and to the OAU at Algiers that issues on the Security Council's agenda will be discussed in the Security Council, and that issues that need to be discussed at the proximity talks will be discussed at the proximity talks. It was not our intention to mix them up here or there. Unfortunately, this has been the experience of our Government with the Government of Eritrea.

Having said this, we look forward to the deployment of the peacekeeping operation. We have so far coordinated and cooperated with the team that was in our country. As was said by many, we also need the international community to address effectively the humanitarian situation we are in.

The President: I call on Under-Secretary-General Bernard Miyet to respond to the comments made and the questions raised.

Mr. Miyet: I think there were essentially two questions raised by the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands and by you, Mr. President. I will try to respond with a few comments.

The first question is linked — and this was an ongoing debate in the Security Council during the retreat and will be part of the Brahimi report and the discussions that will go on in the Council — to assurances on the need for all peacekeeping operations to have properly trained and equipped professional troops to be dispatched. The question has been raised: do we send a mission or even vote on a draft resolution before having these assurances? It is a question being debated right now and one of the key problems which will have to be resolved.

As far as we are concerned, and members have been told by the representative of Eritrea, there has been an ongoing effort on the part of my Department, and in particular by Mr. Annabi, to try to constantly inform the parties in advance of all our intentions and everything we have done to try to organize, set up and launch this Mission. This has been done right from the beginning and will continue to be done throughout this process. I have been pleased with the quality of

relations that have been established with both Permanent Missions here in New York. I wanted to personally thank the Ambassadors and their teams for their spirit of cooperation and the continuous exchange of information and views.

Based on this, it is clear that, as in any operation, we are relying on the troop-contributing countries to be ready to provide troops and on their state of preparedness. It is also important to know that the commitment of the troop-contributing nations and the agreement of the host nations and the parties to a settlement is necessary for deployment. Without the conjunction of that commitment, on one hand, and agreement, on the other, the Secretariat faces difficulties. So we must always try to help the troop-contributing countries be prepared, ready and equipped to do that. We must, at all costs convince the parties of the professionalism and impartiality of the force we are assembling in order to implement a peace agreement. On this point we always need to explain, inform and convince in order to have the capacity to move forward quickly. All the cards are not only in the hands of the Secretariat. These cards have to be shared with the contributing nations and the parties, and with a spirit of full cooperation and understanding we can move swiftly and professionally.

The second question raised by Ambassador van Walsum and you, Mr. President, was the question of reports of violations of sanctions. On this point we must first recall the content of resolution 1298 (2000) and the general request made in paragraph 12 to all States, relevant United Nations bodies and, as appropriate, other organizations and interested parties to report information on possible violations of the measures. This must be applied across the board by all United Nations agencies or departments in the field or elsewhere. These must be reported to you, Mr. President. It has already been proposed by the Secretary-General.

Nevertheless, in paragraph 15 of the report of 9 August (S/2000/785), it is clear that the mandate tailored in this text is in direct relation to the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities signed by the parties, and it is what we propose for the Security Council's agreement. As the Council knows, there is a concept of operations, the size of the force and an area of deployment which can allow us to implement this mandate, but which does not give us the means or the orientation to try to monitor the embargo and that has

not been set as an objective. This has happened in other mission operations; and as far as any other United Nations body has the capacity to get information, it will be put at the disposal of the sanctions Committee. But this is not the task or the mandate of the Mission to try to do that. With that understanding, we will do what we can. It is clear that this Mission has not been set up for that objective, but we will try to assist and help as much as we can.

I just wanted to come back to my first comment, on a speedy deployment, which has been referred to. As I said, this speedy deployment is not only in the Secretariat's hands. We will be able to do it with the goodwill, cooperation and commitment of everyone, and I wanted once again to appeal for the cooperation of all those who can help, parties, troop-contributing countries and the Security Council, to try to do it.

The President: I thank Under-Secretary-General Miyet for the clarification and answers he has provided.

There are no further 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 1 p.m.