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LETTER DATED 31 DECEMBER 1999 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SECURITY
COUNCIL COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 1132 (1997)
CONCERNING SIERRA LEONE ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE
SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1132 (1997) concerning Sierra Leone, containing an account of the Committee's activities since the beginning of 1999. The present report, which was adopted by the Committee on 22 December 1999, is being submitted in accordance with the note by the President of the Council of 29 March 1995 (S/1995/234).

(Signed) Fernando Enrique PETRELLA
Chairman
Security Council Committee established
pursuant to resolution 1132 (1997)
concerning Sierra Leone

Annex

Report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant
to resolution 1132 (1997) concerning Sierra Leone

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee adopted the present report on 22 December 1999. The purpose of the report is to present a factual summary of the Committee's activities since the beginning of 1999, in accordance with the transparency measures outlined by the President of the Security Council in his note of 29 March 1995 (S/1995/234). During this period, the Committee held six meetings and one informal consultation of the members of the Committee, at the expert level.

II. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND SUMMARY OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

A. Background information

2. By resolution 1132 (1997), adopted on 8 October 1997, the Security Council, gravely concerned at the continued violence following the military coup of 25 May 1997 and determining that the situation in Sierra Leone constituted a threat to international peace and security in the region, imposed a regime of mandatory sanctions, under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, against Sierra Leone. Paragraphs 5 and 6 of this resolution prevented the sale or supply to Sierra Leone of petroleum and petroleum products, arms and related matériel of all types as well as imposed restrictions on the travel of members of the military junta of Sierra Leone and adult members of their families. By paragraph 10 of this resolution, the Council established a Committee consisting of all members of the Council. By resolution 1171 (1998), adopted on 5 June 1998, the Council lifted the petroleum embargo, leaving the other measures in effect.

B. Summary of activities of the Committee

3. With reference to paragraph 4 (b) of the note by the President of the Security Council dated 30 October 1998 (S/1998/1016), and following consultations among the members of the Council under the no-objection procedure, the members of the Council agreed to elect the Bureau for 1999, which consisted of Ambassador Fernando Enrique Petrella (Argentina) as Chairman, with the delegations of Bahrain and Namibia providing the two Vice-Chairmen (S/1999/8; SC/6621).

4. The Committee, at its seventh meeting, on 25 January 1999, took action with regard to the recommendations made in the Committee's annual report to the Security Council (S/1998/1236, dated 31 December 1998, annex, para. 25). The Committee agreed to reaffirm the need for close and continued cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), by renewing its request for regular reports to the Committee pertaining to compliance with the arms embargo and

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other aspects of the sanctions regime on Sierra Leone. In an effort to improve compliance with the travel ban in effect under the sanctions regime, the Committee agreed to request additional information from the Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations in an effort to update the list of members of the former military junta and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) (SC/6632). Members of the Committee, as well as other Member States, were invited to submit any relevant information in this regard. In connection with alleged violations of the arms embargo, the Chairman was requested by the Committee to seek further information from the Member States concerned.

5. At the eighth meeting of the Committee, held on 12 March 1999, Mr. Francis Okelo, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, briefed the members on the latest developments in the country since January 1999. Furthermore, the Chairman was requested by the members to seek information from ECOWAS regarding arms and arms matériel (nature, type, quantity and possible origin) retrieved by the Military Observer Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG) from the former military junta in Sierra Leone and/or RUF.

6. As per paragraph 4 of resolution 1171 (1998), the Committee reported to the Security Council on 3 and 16 February, 26 March, 5 April, 29 September and 5 October 1999 (S/1999/111, S/1999/174, S/1999/350, S/1999/381, S/1999/1013 and S/1999/1026), on notifications received from States on the export of arms and related matériel to Sierra Leone, as well as on notifications of imports of arms and related matériel made by the Government of Sierra Leone.

7. On 16 April 1999, the Committee approved a request from the Government of Sierra Leone for an exemption to paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1171 (1998), for an initial period of 30 days, in order to permit the travel to Togo, on 18 April 1999, of Corporal Foday Sayabana Sankoh and a delegation of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)/RUF, in order to facilitate the peace process. On 19 May 1999, in light of the continuing dialogue, and reports of a ceasefire agreement, as well as planned direct talks between the parties concerned, the Committee approved an extension of the above travel exemption, for an additional 30 days. On 18 June 1999, the Committee agreed to further extend the current travel exemption for members of RUF to participate in the ongoing peace talks.

8. With a view to resolving a hostage situation in Sierra Leone, involving several UNOMSIL and ECOMOG personnel, and non-United Nations civilians, the Committee granted an exemption on 6 and 9 August 1999, for 30 days, to paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1171 (1998), in order to allow the travel outside Sierra Leone of Johnny Paul Koroma and Brigadiers Bazzy Karama, Hassan Karama, Gabriel Mani and Major Paul Bonke Leke, respectively.

9. On 26 November 1999, the Committee approved a request from the Government of Sierra Leone for an exemption to paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1171 (1998) for Brigadier Mike Lamin, Minister of Trade and Industry, to enable him to lead his country's delegation to the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle, Washington, United States of America. On 30 November 1999, a similar request was approved for Mr. Paolo Bangura, Minister of Energy and Power, to attend the African Energy Ministers Conference in Tucson, Arizona, United States of America.

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C. Violations and alleged violations of the sanctions regime

10. At its 10th meeting, held on 3 May 1999, the Committee considered a report from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on a possible violation of the arms embargo, involving an alleged air shipment of arms from Ukraine, via Burkina Faso, with delivery, through Liberia, to the rebels in Sierra Leone. Members expressed appreciation for the information received from Ukraine and Burkina Faso, and agreed to request additional information from ECOWAS and Liberia, and to ask Ukraine and Burkina Faso for further information on the type and quantity of weapons shipped. The Committee also agreed to send a letter to the United Kingdom requesting information on the involvement of a company registered in Gibraltar in this matter.

11. The Committee, at its 11th meeting, held on 20 May 1999, considered a letter dated 14 May 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of Nigeria and the United Kingdom and the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the United States Mission to the United Nations, addressed to the Chairman of the Committee, regarding an alleged violation of the sanctions regime, involving a shipment of arms, on an aircraft registered in Ukraine, from Burkina Faso to Liberia. The arms were then transported across the Liberian border to the rebel forces in Sierra Leone. The Committee agreed to send letters (all dated 24 May 1999) to the Permanent Representatives of Burkina Faso, Liberia and Ukraine, as well as ECOWAS, requesting additional information that might be available that could assist the Committee in its deliberations.

12. At its 12th meeting, on 15 June 1999, the Committee considered letters received from the Permanent Representatives of Burkina Faso (10 June 1999) and Ukraine (1 June 1999), the Chargé d'affaires of Liberia (9 June 1999) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone (28 May 1999), with respect to alleged violations of the arms embargo. The Committee agreed to request from the Government of Burkina Faso (letters dated 30 June and 2 August 1999) additional information on the flight plan of the aircraft that had arrived in Ouagadougou on 18 March 1999 with a shipment of arms, and allegedly continued on to Liberia. The Committee also took note of a text read by the Representative of the United Kingdom, stating that his Government was aware of the involvement of a British company, Air Foyle, in the shipment of arms to Burkina Faso, as contained in the communication from Ukraine. According to the statement, Air Foyle had been currently cooperating with British Customs. Further, at the present time, his Government had no information to suggest that Air Foyle had been involved in the onward shipment from Ouagadougou to Liberia.

13. On 29 September 1999, taking into account the information provided by the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso in his letter dated 24 August 1999, the Committee addressed a letter to the Director-General of the Agency for Air Navigation Safety in Africa and Madagascar (ASECNA), with a view to seeking additional information pertaining to an alleged breach of the arms embargo that had occurred on 18 March 1999. The Committee has still to receive a reply from ASECNA.

III. OBSERVATIONS

14. Since the Sanctions Committee plays a central role in the monitoring of the implementation of the sanctions regime on Sierra Leone, it should consider ways to improve the monitoring and implementation of the sanctions against Sierra Leone. Reports through ECOWAS, from ECOMOG, and/or UNOMSIL, could strengthen the effectiveness of the arms embargo, by assisting the Committee in its efforts to guard against the influx of arms and related matériel of all types into the territory of Sierra Leone (as recommended in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Security Council resolution 1196 (1998), adopted on 16 September 1998).
