



Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

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Wednesday, 13 June 2001, 10.55 a.m.

New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Chowdhury	(Bangladesh)
<i>Members:</i>	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Franco
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Ireland	Mr. Cooney
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Mali	Mr. Kassé
	Mauritius	Mr. Neewoor
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Tunisia	Mr. Tekaya
	Ukraine	Mr. Kuchinsky
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Hume

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2001/572).

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2001/572)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Japan, Namibia, Rwanda and Sweden, 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.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, His Excellency Mr. Léonard She Okitundu.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. She Okitundu (Democratic Republic of the Congo) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Akasaka (Japan), Mr. Theron (Namibia), Mr. Gasana (Rwanda) and Mr. Norström (Sweden) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

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

There being no objection, it is so decided.

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

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Olara Otunnu, Under-Secretary-General in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

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

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

Members of the Council have before them the eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, document S/2001/572. Members of the Council also have before them the report of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, 15-26 May 2001, documents S/2001/521 and S/2001/521/Add.1.

At this meeting the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and by Mr. Olara Otunnu, Under-Secretary-General in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

I now give the floor to Mr. Guéhenno.

Mr. Guéhenno (*spoke in French*): The eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) was issued on 8 June 2001 as document S/2001/572. The report describes developments since the issuance of the Secretary-General's previous report (S/2001/373), on 17 April, and contains recommendations for the future activities of MONUC. The mandate of MONUC is scheduled to terminate on 15 June.

In his report, the Secretary-General recommends an extension of the mandate of MONUC for 12 months, until 15 June 2002. The objective of that long extension is to demonstrate the commitment of the Security Council to MONUC and to the resolution of the conflict in the Great Lakes region. It is also

designed to facilitate the recruitment of civilian staff of the necessary high quality by ensuring greater continuity.

The Secretary-General also requests authorization from the Security Council for a transition to the third phase of MONUC deployment. The second phase — deployment to monitor and verify the disengagement of forces from the confrontation line — is now in the process of being accomplished, as Front de libération du Congo (FLC) forces draw back from their forward positions. MONUC is in the process of confirming the withdrawal of FLC units from Befale and Bolomba. However, the Secretary-General is not yet ready to submit detailed plans for MONUC activities in phase III, since the parties have not yet provided the information required to formulate such detailed plans. As Council members will recall, that specific military information was required in accordance with the plans for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed groups. MONUC is continuing to work with the parties in compiling and analyzing that information, so that it will be able to prepare the plans.

The Secretary-General is not at this time seeking to exceed the authorized troop strength of 5,537, which was approved by the Security Council in its resolution 1291 (2000). However, it is envisaged to continue to build up the military contingent of MONUC within the figure of 5,537. For example, the vastness of the country and the lack of infrastructure require the establishment of four helicopter refuelling bases — at Manono, Ilebo, Boende and Basankusu — which will need to be protected by armed security units of approximately 200 personnel each. A second riverine unit, also of some 200 personnel, has already been approved. Additional military observers will be needed to verify and monitor some of the more remote positions occupied by the parties pursuant to the disengagement plan, and to staff forward headquarters locations. A military police unit will also be required, and there will be a need to reinforce existing contingents in some areas, including Kisangani.

The demilitarization of Kisangani was demanded by the Security Council in its resolution 1304 (2000), a demand reinforced by the Security Council mission during its recent visit to the region. MONUC will continue to insist that the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) withdraw its forces from

Kisangani. To that end, MONUC military planners are prepared to assist the RCD to draw up plans for an orderly withdrawal of its forces from Kisangani.

At the same time, MONUC is very much aware of the political, military and symbolic importance of Kisangani to the RCD, as well as of the potential fragility of the economic and security situation there. A precipitous withdrawal of RCD military forces could contribute to creating trouble in the city and could have adverse implications for the peace process. In keeping with its expectations that the local authorities will retain responsibility for civil administration and the maintenance of law and order, MONUC has no objection to the RCD remaining as the de facto civil authority in Kisangani. Accordingly, it is vital for local stability to ensure, prior to the withdrawal of RCD military forces, that the local police have adequate capacity to maintain law and order after the departure of RCD military forces. Although MONUC is prepared to build up its military strength in order to ensure its own security, it has no intention of assuming law and order functions in Kisangani.

(spoke in English)

The Secretary-General envisages an expansion of the civilian components of MONUC. So far, in view of the daunting logistical problems of deployment, the vast majority of the civilian staff of the operation have been administrative and logistical personnel. As we contemplate entry into phase III, it will be necessary to expand the other civilian operations of the mission, including the political, human rights, humanitarian, child protection and public information staff. The Secretary-General also considers that the inclusion in MONUC, for the first time, of the nucleus of a civilian police component is of major importance.

The function of many of these civilian staff will be, in brief, to gather as much information as possible concerning the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in the east and, most especially, in the Kivus. At the same time, through its public information operations, including radio, MONUC will explain to the Congolese parties and people what it and the broader international community are doing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The information gathered will supplement the detailed data that the parties are expected to provide in respect of the armed groups to be disarmed and demobilized.

The human rights, humanitarian and child-protection personnel will also have a great deal to do in terms of helping to improve the quality of life of the Congolese people. As access to civilian populations in need increases, and as foreign and rebel armies disengage and begin to withdraw, the possibilities of providing assistance will increase. It should be noted that the risks could also increase, in what has become a widespread climate of impunity and lawlessness in many parts of the country.

With reference to the specific question of the security of the civilian populations in the areas to be evacuated by foreign forces as they withdraw, the Secretary-General has made clear his view that this is primarily the responsibility of the parties. Nevertheless, where it is safe to do so, the deployment of MONUC civilian human rights monitors, civil affairs officers and, eventually, civilian police officers is intended to mitigate the potential threat that these populations might face.

During its recent visit, the Security Council mission became aware of the economic aspects of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of the role that MONUC could play in improving the economic situation. While this is not usually a feature of peacekeeping operations, its importance in this case cannot be over-stressed. The reopening of the Congo River system — which was announced by Ambassador Levitte, the leader of the mission, during its visit to Mbandaka — is of central significance, politically, militarily and economically. As a first step towards the reopening of the river, two fast Uruguayan patrol boats with 14 military personnel onboard left Kinshasa for Mbandaka on 8 June, accompanying a barge loaded with vehicles and bulk fuel and water containers. That convoy is due to arrive in Mbandaka on 16 June. Another barge, loaded with fuel for MONUC and accompanied by a boat chartered by MONUC, is today at Lisala, between Mbandaka and Kisangani.

In this connection, we have noted with concern the reported statement of a senior RCD official that the rebel group might block the MONUC fuel convoy before it reaches Kisangani. The official was quoted yesterday as saying that the RCD would not let the boat reach Kisangani before MONUC investigates allegations of ceasefire violations which the RCD claims have been committed by Government forces. The RCD also claimed that the reopening of the river

“would only benefit President Kabila and facilitate infiltration”.

Needless to say, we do not accept that interpretation, and we continue to favour the reopening of the river system as the most important single step that can be taken to promote an economic recovery of the country, to enable the Congolese people to re-establish contacts, to reinforce the territorial integrity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, not least, to enable MONUC to support its own contingents throughout the country in a way that would be cheaper and more easily sustainable. The Force Commander, General Diallo, is taking this matter up today with the RCD as a matter of urgency. The Council may wish to call on the RCD not to link the progress of the MONUC convoy with its demand for an investigation of the ceasefire violation claims. MONUC will investigate those allegations, as it has done in the past, and make its findings known as soon as possible.

In his report, the Secretary-General welcomes the announcement by the neutral facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire, of the convening of a preparatory meeting for the dialogue on 16 July. MONUC will continue to support the efforts of the facilitator and looks forward to further developments in the planning and conduct of the dialogue. Sir Ketumile Masire has now dispatched his two senior advisers, Mr. Archibald Mogwe and Mr. Mohamed El Hacen Ould Lebat, to visit all 11 provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in preparation for the preparatory meeting to be held on 16 July.

Since the report was completed, there have been a few developments that I would like to bring to the attention of the Council. Among those are allegations from the RCD that the Forces armées congolaises (FAC) have allegedly occupied positions vacated by the RCD. MONUC intends to investigate the allegations, and has taken the matter up with the Government.

As the Council knows, we had hoped that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kamel Morjane could be with us this week. Unfortunately, on his way here he suffered a severe bout of malaria and is currently recuperating in Geneva. En route there, he visited Libreville for talks with President Bongo. The Gabonese head of State reiterated his readiness to assist efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly through the inter-Congolese dialogue. President Bongo informed Mr. Morjane that he had maintained contacts with many Congolese political leaders, including in the armed opposition. Speaking of the withdrawal of foreign forces, the President of Gabon insisted on a distinction between “invaders” and invited forces.

Ugandan and Zimbabwean troops continue to withdraw from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. MONUC has reported further movements of the Uganda People’s Defence Forces from the northern Democratic Republic of the Congo, though some Ugandan troops have also been deployed to Beni following recent fighting there between FLC troops and former Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Mouvement de libération (RCD-ML) elements. Beni is also reported to be the scene of clashes between Mayi-Mayi militiamen and the FLC. Zimbabwe Defence Force troops also appear to be preparing to evacuate their position at Ikela, and the Government of Namibia has announced its intention to withdraw its troops by 31 August.

Assuming the continued commitment of the parties to the Lusaka Agreement and to the plans they themselves have drawn up, MONUC is about to enter a particularly demanding phase of its activities. The continued support of the Security Council, as demonstrated by the Council’s endorsement of the report of the Secretary-General and its recommendations, would send a convincing signal to the parties that the United Nations was prepared to do what it could to assist them in their efforts to restore peace, security and the basis of prosperity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

The President: I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his comprehensive briefing and for his presentation of the eighth report of the Secretary-General.

I will now give the floor to Mr. Olara Otunnu.

Mr. Otunnu: It is wonderful to see you, Sir, a devoted advocate of the protection of children, presiding over this meeting. And it is very good to have the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with us this morning as well.

I have just concluded a mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The purpose of my visit was to assess firsthand the impact of the wars on children. In

the context of my mandate and pursuant to the request of the Security Council in resolution 1341 (2001), I was able to visit different parts of the country, including several of the provinces. Everywhere I went I held discussions with political and military authorities, local and international humanitarian non-governmental organizations and, of course, United Nations agencies and civil society. But above all, throughout the country I was able to meet and hear directly from different groups of war-affected children and their families.

I have to tell the Council that the direct and indirect impact of the wars has taken a very heavy toll on the children. In a country in which somewhere close to 50 per cent of a population of 49 million people are children under 16 years of age, consider the following. The vast majority of some 2 million people displaced within the country by the wars are children and women. Hundreds of thousands of children suffer or have died from severe malnutrition and preventable diseases because of the conditions created by the wars. According to a non-governmental organization, the International Rescue Committee, since the outbreak of hostilities in August 1998 there have been no less than 2.5 million so-called excess deaths — meaning, above the number usually expected — in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo alone. The majority of these victims have been children.

Most families in the Democratic Republic of the Congo today subsist on \$1 a day. Forty per cent of the country’s children are systematically and seriously malnourished. In the past 10 years, infant mortality has doubled. More than half of the children of school age in the country are not attending school, and the incidence of child labour — especially at mining sites — child prostitution and street children has sharply increased. There is the particular and silent trauma of girls exposed to sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS and forced to become concubines by soldiers of various affiliations. Everywhere I went I received consistent reports of the massive recruitment and use of child soldiers throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

All these categories of war-affected children need our urgent attention and support. In the light of my visit I would like to put forward the following recommendations for the Council’s consideration. There is an urgent need for a plan of action to address the grave situation of war-affected children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Their protection

and rehabilitation must become a national and political priority. This should figure prominently on the agenda of the inter-Congolese dialogue and in the peace process in general.

A word about the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). The arrival of the military contingent and military observers has had a striking impact on the local populations. Three elements seem to have particular meaning for the local communities. The sheer presence of these personnel is bringing much-needed confidence and reassurance to the local populations, allowing them to pick up pieces of their shattered lives. These personnel are facilitating and engaging in humanitarian activities and are closely associated with the protection of children. I would strongly recommend the expansion and strengthening of these elements of the role of MONUC. This will benefit the local populations and enhance further the considerable credibility of the United Nations.

The peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has gained a new lease on life, needs to be accompanied by parallel efforts to gain access and to provide serious humanitarian assistance to populations in distress — particularly children and women. The priority responsibility for ensuring the well-being of the children — and, therefore, the future of the country — naturally rests with the Congolese leaders. I have urged them to fully assume their responsibility in this regard.

But today I appeal to the international community to do its part to reach out to the Congolese children and offer concrete assistance, focusing in particular on the rehabilitation of schools and health-care centres at the primary and local levels and providing much-needed resources for the demobilization of child soldiers. These measures are necessary to break the present cycle of despair and exploitation. They will also serve as means to protect and rehabilitate children and prevent their being caught back up in that cycle.

The massive recruitment and use of children as child soldiers has become nothing short of a plague that is steadily destroying the fabric and the future of the Congo and of that entire zone of Africa. The place of children is in schools, with their families and with their communities — not in battlefields.

I have therefore proposed the following five-point programme of action, which has been accepted by the

political and military leaders of all groups. The programme is a complete stop — a definitive, complete stop to all recruitment of young persons below the age of 18 and the establishment of a mechanism to monitor and report on the application of that commitment; the organization of a major public-awareness campaign to sensitize the military, civil society and local communities; the undertaking of joint visits by MONUC, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and military authorities to military camps and barracks where children are suspected of being housed; and the establishment of the necessary capacity and structures on the ground for the demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers.

In this connection, may I warmly welcome and congratulate the Government and the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the recent ratification of the Optional Protocol that was announced during my visit to the country.

These important commitments and measures need to be translated into concrete action that can make a difference to the lives of children on the ground. I am counting on the political and military leaders to demonstrate the necessary political will and to deliver on their commitments.

But in the meantime, we of the international community, working closely with local and civil society organizations, need to establish a framework — a network — to monitor the conduct of the parties in conflict relative to their obligations and commitments for the protection of children.

Child soldiering has also become a cross-border and subregional activity. Children are being recruited in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, taken to neighbouring countries for training, and then brought back to fight in the Congo. Similarly, children of neighbouring countries are being recruited and taken to fight in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We therefore need a neighbour with the initiative to promote protection, control and advocacy with respect to this damaging practice at the subregional level.

I referred earlier to the particular vulnerability of girls exposed to sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS by soldiers of various groups. There is a need for a special programme to address the special needs of this category of victims. This is all the more important because of the social stigma and the reticence that

prevails, which makes it difficult to address these issues within the communities.

We also must be very vigilant in taking measures to ensure that there is no impunity, now or later, for crimes committed against children. I urge and encourage troop-contributing countries — and I know that our colleagues in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are doing everything in their power — to provide more systematic training for troops who are serving with MONUC.

What I saw in the Congo encouraged me enormously at other levels. I was very encouraged by the vigour and commitment of civil society throughout the Congo. I urge the United Nations and other actors of the international community to link our efforts much more closely with those of local civil society organizations. This is the best way, in the long term, to make our efforts sustainable and to build local capacity for protection and advocacy.

Everywhere I went, children and their parents called for an end to the war — the Congolese children have suffered far too much — and an end to the looting of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I have to say that the widespread and systematic looting of diamonds, gold, coltan, timber and coffee from the Democratic Republic of the Congo by all concerned is entirely unacceptable. This is robbing the Congolese children of their birthright, of resources that should be used for their education, health care and development. Moreover, it has become the surest way to fuel the continuation of the war. The children of the Congo are looking to the Council to take decisive action to bring this practice to a halt.

In conclusion, I should like to say that I was particularly impressed and encouraged by the commitment of all sectors and of Congolese people of all persuasions to preserve their national unity; by the strength and engagement of civil society throughout the country; and by the resilience and determination of local communities and the youth.

A united, peaceful and vigorous Congo is good for Congolese children. It is good for the development and future of Africa, and it is good for international peace and security. I look forward to working very closely with you in the Council, Mr. President, as well as with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, MONUC, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other agencies and non-governmental

organizations to follow up on these issues and on the recommendations which I have brought to the Council's attention.

The President: I thank Ambassador Otunnu for his excellent briefing. I should also like to thank him, on behalf of the Council, for undertaking the visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as mandated by the Council. We believe that his five-point programme of action, which he says has the acceptance of all political sides, will require the attention of the Council as we engage in the preparation of the draft resolution with regard to the extension of MONUC's mandate. In addition, various other points, particularly the subregional angle that Mr. Otunnu brought in, will require our attention on related agenda items of the Council. I thank him also for his gracious reference to me.

I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Leonard Okitundu.

Mr. Okitundu (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset, Sir, on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf, warmly to congratulate you on your assumption to the presidency of the Security Council. While recognizing the merits of your predecessor, the representative of the United States of America, I am particularly gratified to see the presidency assumed by the representative of a friendly country, Bangladesh.

I should like also to avail myself of this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his persistent efforts in favour of the maintenance and restoration of peace throughout the world, and in particular for his eighth report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I take this opportunity also to express our gratitude to Mr. Olara Otunnu and to Mr. Guéhenno for the mission they carried out to my country.

Let me also express the deep gratitude of my Government and of the Congolese people to the Security Council mission that visited the Great Lakes region in May to gain a firsthand insight into the realities of the Congolese crisis and to better assess mechanisms for its resolution.

Finally, let me voice my heartfelt gratitude to all of the personnel of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

(MONUC), in particular Ambassador Kamel Morjane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, who masterfully led that mission, to the great satisfaction of all parties concerned.

Concerning the peace process that is under way in my country, I should like to comment on a few issues that my Government considers essential. I will discuss the following points: disengagement; the demilitarization of Kisangani; the withdrawal of foreign forces; the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and reinstallation of armed groups; the inter-Congolese dialogue; the humanitarian situation and the economic revival of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and, finally, the transition to the third phase.

Turning to the disengagement process, we take note of the fact that there have been delays because of the continued refusal of one of the parties to the Lusaka Agreement to abide by the Kampala plan and the Harare sub-plans for disengagement and redeployment, despite oft-repeated promises.

The Security Council had ordered that party to disengage from Equateur province starting on 1 June 2001, to new defensive positions under the Harare sub-plans.

My Government must inform the Security Council that the party has in no way disengaged in keeping with the Kampala plan of 8 April 2000. If the disengagement is to be consistent with the Kampala plan, the party must withdraw by at least 165 kilometres from its current positions. If disengagement does not take place shortly, as determined by this Council, the measures provided for in paragraph 28 of resolution 1341 (2001) of 22 February 2001 must be imposed. That is, moreover, the position of this Council, clearly expressed in paragraph 103 of the mission report contained in document S/2001/521 of 29 May, in which the main organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security affirms that its members would react sharply if that party did not disengage to the agreed position as from 1 June.

With respect to the question of the demilitarization of Kisangani, my Government feels that it should be resolved on a priority basis. The Council mission to the Great Lakes region noted that Kisangani has yet to be demilitarized. This deliberate non-demilitarization can be characterized only as a

flagrant violation of the relevant provisions of resolution 1304 (2000) of 16 June 2000, unanimously adopted by the Council over a year ago, which provisions were reaffirmed by International Court of Justice Order No. 116 of 1 July 2000 concerning the armed activities on the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At the risk of wearying its members, I must remind the Council that the city of Kisangani underwent its own war within the war of aggression. Kisangani was the theatre of unusually violent fighting between the regular armed forces of Uganda and Rwanda, in violation not only of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, but also and above all of international public law. All this fighting entailed tremendous loss of human life, as well as the destruction of the economic, social and cultural infrastructures of the city. These serious armed confrontations have left an indelible mark and deeply traumatized the population of Kisangani.

My Government therefore calls on the Security Council to determine, in the draft resolution that it is about to adopt on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a specific date for the effective and complete demilitarization of Kisangani. It is up to the Security Council to transmit a clear and precise message reminding the forces of occupation not to underestimate its determination to enforce respect for all resolutions on the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and that they must demilitarize Kisangani as soon as possible.

It is also up to the Security Council to consider innovative measures to ensure respect for resolution 1304 (2000). The United Nations must be in a position to reinforce the Moroccan troops and to increase its civilian and associated staff in order to assist in administering the city. Just as Kisangani has been the symbol of the martyrdom and suffering of the Congolese people, we are convinced that it will become the political and physical symbol of renewal and the return to dignity of an entire people.

As regards the withdrawal of foreign forces and disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation, all the leaders of the region confirmed to the Council mission the joint objective of withdrawing from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 1304 (2000).

Furthermore, we clearly stated in Lusaka that this concept of the withdrawal of foreign forces should include a timetable with D-Day set for 22 February 2001.

As is known, General Njuki Mwaniki, Chairman of the Joint Military Commission (JMC) entrusted with the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, has convened a meeting of the JMC for 22 June in order to finalize precise plans for withdrawal and for disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation. In the ongoing interest of advancing the peace process, my Government affirms that it will spare no effort at that meeting to finalize the plans for withdrawal and for disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation. Specific instructions will be given to the Government representative so that he may assist in resolving all pending issues.

With respect to the disarmament of the armed groups, disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation will be provided to them in conformity with the Lusaka Agreement, which, we would recall, recognizes the need to find solutions to the security concerns of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the neighbouring countries.

In that respect, I would inform the Council that my Government has taken the initiative of opening direct contacts at the highest level with the leaders of the aggressor countries. We seek credibly to formulate our security concerns and to define practical modalities of responding to them. That is the only way for us to find a way of reconciling our countries and to establish peaceful coexistence between our States and respective peoples.

As to my Government, I can assure the Council that the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot serve as a staging post for the destabilization of neighbouring countries. It is important for us to know, however, that a peace restored through negotiations between States will not last long unless the deep-seated causes of the crisis in the Great Lakes region, including exclusion and intolerance, are addressed. Lasting peace in the Great Lakes region requires the promotion of democracy, human rights, national concord and reconciliation within each of our countries. To ignore this dimension of the issue of peace would be to prolong the unrest for a long time or indefinitely and to strengthen the advocates of ethnic cleansing. The

adherents and advocates of these ideologies must be sought and brought before an international tribunal.

With respect to the inter-Congolese dialogue, my Government reaffirms its commitment to that great forum, which it considers to be an irreversible process and the best possible road to national reconciliation. We place all our trust in President Masire's ability to convene the inter-Congolese dialogue as soon as possible. We wish it to be an inclusive process that will bring together all trends and socio-political groupings in the country, with no foreign interference or military pressure whatsoever, so that they may reflect on and devote themselves calmly to the future of the Congolese nation and have their say in the new institutions of the next Republic. That is why we have welcomed the facilitator's proposal to convene a preparatory meeting to the dialogue on 16 July 2001.

As regards the issue of child soldiers, my Government has already issued a decree, as pointed out earlier by Mr. Otunnu, forbidding the recruitment of child soldiers in the Congolese armed forces and launching the process of their demobilization. During his recent visit to Kinshasa, Mr. Otunnu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, noted that my country has signed and ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, as well as the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

With the support of the United Nations Children's Fund, my Government recently launched a vast awareness campaign to ensure the immediate demobilization of any child soldiers still serving in the Congolese armed forces, to halt the use of child soldiers and to protect children from sexual abuse and other forms of exploitation.

With respect to the humanitarian situation and the economic recovery of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we must note that the humanitarian situation in my country is a disaster. According to data provided by non-governmental organizations, such as the International Rescue Committee and United Nations agencies, more than 2.5 million Congolese have died in the occupied territories as the direct or indirect victims of aggression. Such bodies as the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the European Community Humanitarian Office

point to an unbearable humanitarian catastrophe. There are 2.1 million displaced persons. Almost 400,000 Congolese have taken refuge in neighbouring countries. Sixteen million people have been directly affected by the war, and the number of vulnerable persons — street children, widows, orphans — has multiplied. Child soldiers have been recruited by force.

The Council mission noted the precarious situation of the Congolese population in the provinces that are occupied as well as in those that are under Government control. The recent Government devaluation, carried out on the recommendation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, has had a devastating effect on the daily lives of my people.

Furthermore, the systematic looting of the natural resources and other forms of wealth of the soil and the subsoil of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is being carried out at an unbridled pace with full impunity, thus depriving an entire population of the benefit of the tremendous resources the country is fortunate enough to possess.

The Council is also aware that these activities run counter to international public law and violate the Congolese people's right to freely dispose of its natural wealth and resources, as enshrined in common article 1 of the two United Nations covenants of 1966: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This is also a contravention of the principle of respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been repeatedly reaffirmed in United Nations resolutions on the situation in my country.

The Council mission identified and announced publicly some 40 small quick-impact projects to be carried out in the zones where the contingents of MONUC are deployed. My Government is grateful to the leader of the Council mission for having called upon the Bretton Woods institutions to contribute to the implementation of these projects.

However, what is important for the Congolese population is the need to include provisions for post-conflict management that is appropriate for this crisis in the plans to restore lasting peace. The Democratic Republic of the Congo requires the full support of the international community. In an act of international solidarity that is commensurate with existing needs, the

international community must commit itself to helping the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly through the appropriate resumption of multilateral and bilateral structural cooperation, as well as by providing access to various debt-relief mechanisms, including the facilities enjoyed by countries emerging from an armed conflict under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

If the reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is handled properly from the outset, it can only help the situation throughout Central Africa and the Great Lakes region, which includes Rwanda and Burundi, and where, until not so long ago, there was a regulatory mechanism with an integrating effect that facilitated their peaceful coexistence. This mechanism could be revived in some other form on which we could all agree.

Therefore, the disengagement and withdrawal processes must be accelerated to put an end to the misery of the Congolese people. A large-scale international humanitarian operation, in which many friendly countries have already announced their willingness to participate, would finally permit the Democratic Republic of the Congo to create optimum conditions to curtail traditional structural forms of cooperation.

Regarding the transition to phase III, it is important to note that in his report the Secretary-General, on the basis of the conclusions of the Council mission to the Great Lakes region, calls on the Council to approve the transition to phase III of MONUC.

My Government takes note of the ceiling of 5,537 personnel. However, we vigorously request that the MONUC mandate be redefined to endow it with a clear enforcement capacity. As far as I am concerned, this is a *sine qua non* for the success of the process.

It also seems vital to me to underline that the imperative of the withdrawal activities of foreign troops call for increased civilian, military and associated MONUC staff, so that it can successfully carry out the support policies aimed at ensuring peace, security and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

To secure the smooth development and regular follow-up of all relevant MONUC activities and the Joint Military Commission, my Government is convinced that the co-location of these two structures

in Kinshasa and in the field will promote significant progress in the peace process. This is why my Government invites the Security Council to exert all its influence to ensure that the decision to co-locate the Joint Military Commission and MONUC, which has been accepted by all the parties, will be realized, particularly bearing in mind that the security concerns raised by certain parties have been proved baseless in the report of the Chairman of the Joint Military Commission submitted to the Security Council delegation in Lusaka on 22 May 2001.

I cannot conclude without restating my Government's concern regarding the snail's pace of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My Government is convinced that because of procrastination, only greater involvement of the Security Council and the redefinition of the MONUC mandate, in order to give it a clear enforcement capacity, can bring about the successful implementation of the process now under way.

Finally, to put an end to the allegations of certain parties, the Government invites MONUC to intensify its deployment in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is currently occupied. All this justifies the urgent need to redefine the mandate and increase the MONUC staff.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for his kind words addressed to me and to my country.

I shall now call on the members of the Council. In addition to the 15 Council members, 6 others have requested to take the floor on this subject, so I emphasize the need for brevity and focus with regard to the statements that are going to be made here.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): It is a pleasure to welcome the presence in this Chamber of Mr. Shé Okitundu, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

My first words will be to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Mr. Olara Otunnu for their brilliant presentations on the situation and to extend warm wishes for the recovery of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kamel Morjane.

The mission that the Security Council carried out recently to the Great Lakes region was exceptionally

important. It made it possible to make certain progress, limited yet concrete. The peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is showing encouraging developments. The ceasefire is being fully respected. Disengagement proceeds. Several States have begun to withdraw their troops from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including Uganda, Zimbabwe and, soon, Namibia.

The inter-Congolese dialogue is also progressing, with visits to all the provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by envoys of Mr. Masire, aimed at appointing representatives for the dialogue; the preparatory meeting will start on 16 July. Finally, the announced reopening of the River Congo, with the arrival of the Uruguayan riverine unit, is a harbinger of hope for millions of Congolese from Kinshasa to Kisangani. None of the parties should threaten this hope in any way. All must participate actively in the Congo River Basin Commission.

The Security Council had an opportunity to address these various points during the consideration of the report of its mission to the Great Lakes region. Today, we have before us the eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), document S/2001/572. As we work on a draft resolution to extend the Mission's mandate, we must assess the current situation and consider the message the Council should send to the parties.

The Council shares the cautious optimism to which the Secretary-General refers in his report. But the peace process has not yet reached the point of no return. It remains fragile, and the parties to the conflict must continue their efforts. First of all, the disengagement phase must be completed; the parties to the conflict have prepared and signed disengagement plans, and these must be implemented in full.

The Front de libération du Congo (FLC) announced that it would disengage to agreed positions with effect from 1 June. That announcement is described in the account of the meeting of the Political Committee and the Security Council mission. Mr. Jean-Pierre Bemba reiterated that commitment during his meeting with the Security Council mission on 25 May. That promise must be kept through concrete action. The FLC must redeploy without delay to the positions of the Harare sub-plans.

The demilitarization of Kisangani is another priority. Rwanda and Uganda have withdrawn their troops from the city, and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) must do the same. It is unacceptable that those troops remain there a year after the adoption of resolution 1304 (2000), which called for the demilitarization of Kisangani.

Finally, both the FLC and the RCD, must fully cooperate with MONUC. The obstacles that those two movements are placing in the way of MONUC's deployment and of its verification and monitoring teams, which are described in the report of the Secretary-General, are unacceptable and are incompatible with the pursuit of the peace process.

While the ceasefire is generally being respected by the signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, we note that foreign armed groups that are not signatories to the Agreement have acted to engage in clashes. These could jeopardize the peace process. The civilian populations of Congo and of neighbouring countries, particularly Burundi, will have to foot the bill for this. All parties to the Lusaka Agreement, and especially the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, must ensure that all support for those foreign armed groups ceases. This issue must be resolved through a negotiated process of the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement of those groups.

The Council encourages the development of a dialogue among the heads of State concerned to address this important problem in accordance with the Lusaka Agreement. The Council takes note of the assurances just given by Mr. Okitundu; they must be acted upon as soon as possible.

Human rights violations are another cause for great concern within the Council. All parties to the conflict must do much more in this area, especially in the eastern part of the country. We are concerned to note that local human rights organizations are everywhere subjected to serious harassment. As Mr. Otunnu has so eloquently reminded us, children continue to be the most vulnerable victims of the conflict. His recommendations, especially the demobilization of child soldiers, should be a priority for everyone.

The plundering of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo must cease. The Council has taken note of the initiatives announced by

some States, such as Uganda, to shed light on this matter. But here again, we are awaiting results. This summer, the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which was established by the Council, will submit a further assessment of the situation. We are determined to take whatever measures may be necessary to put an end to this plundering, which has come to fuel the conflict.

Only complete respect by the parties for the commitments they themselves negotiated will enable the dynamic of peace to continue. The primary responsibility for the implementation of the Lusaka process lies with the belligerent parties themselves. For its part, the Security Council is determined to assist the parties in their efforts — if they fully respect their commitments. The Council has demonstrated this by authorizing the deployment of MONUC. MONUC is today in its second phase of deployment, in which it is following the disengagement process.

Like the Secretary-General, we consider that in order to support the dynamic of peace we must prepare for MONUC's next phase. In the third phase, the Mission will assist the parties to implement the withdrawal plans and the process of disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration. But again, the ball is in the parties' court. Overall plans have been prepared, and they are an excellent point of departure. But they must be finalized as a matter of urgency. For the Secretariat to begin its planning, it requires detailed information on the location and composition of foreign forces and on their withdrawal routes. The Secretariat also needs information about the composition and location of foreign armed groups and about the sites where they will gather for the purpose of demobilization. All the parties must provide this information as soon as possible; without it, MONUC will be unable to provide support.

The Joint Military Commission must be co-located with MONUC headquarters to make it possible for those two bodies to engage in daily cooperation.

The parties to the Lusaka Agreement have established a partnership with the Security Council. Beyond the Council, the entire international community must today marshal its efforts. It must speedily provide substantial economic assistance to the

Democratic Republic of the Congo so that the return of peace can be accompanied by improved living conditions for the Congolese. The international community must also be prepared to assist all the States of the region in implementing solutions developed by those States themselves with a view to ensuring stability in Central Africa. Here, I am thinking, *inter alia*, of the proposed regional conference on peace, security, democracy and development. But here again, it is efforts by the parties to the conflict that will enable that partnership to bear fruit.

Because the Council is to extend the mandate of MONUC, we must continue our close contacts with the signatories of the Lusaka Agreement to enable us to assess our support for the peace process as best we can and as accurately as possible. As Ambassador Greenstock has suggested, we could take advantage of the opening of the fifth-sixth session of the General Assembly, in late September or early October, when ministers members of the Political Committee of the Lusaka Agreement will be in New York, to organize a further meeting with the Security Council. In that way, we could deepen our confidence-building dialogue and our cooperation to the benefit of peace for the people of Congo and for all the other peoples of the Great Lakes region.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): First of all, I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General, which reflects the developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the last two months. I would also like to welcome the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Léonard She Okitundu, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara Otunnu. I would like to thank Mr. Otunnu for a very convincing briefing on the plight of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and especially for his recommendations to the Security Council on a programme of action aimed at remedying the situation.

While taking into account some recent progress made in preserving the ceasefire, the disengagement of forces, enhancing the inter-Congolese dialogue and deploying the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) — which was undoubtedly promoted by the visit of the Security Council mission to the region last month — we are not certain about the irreversibility of the peace

process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is quite closely linked to the political situation in some neighbouring countries.

The precarious situation is still dependent on many political, military and social problems whose solution depends on the willingness of the parties to implement their commitments under the Lusaka peace Agreement. In this regard, it is extremely important for the parties concerned to realize that only a comprehensive solution to the problems, accompanied by their readiness to engage in constructive dialogue and to compromise, can bring about real results leading to a meaningful settlement of the conflict. We again call upon all the parties to leave behind needless ambitions and engage in practical implementation of the Lusaka accord.

In this connection, we would like to express our concern over the fact that some parties still have not provided information on the numbers, disposition and armaments of their forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Further progress in transforming the revised concept of operations into a genuine plan is directly dependent on that information.

We still cannot identify as satisfactory the level of cooperation between MONUC and the leaders of the Front de libération du Congo (FLC) and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma). That lack of cooperation also runs counter to the spirit of arrangements under the Lusaka Agreement. We urge all the parties to ensure an adequate level of cooperation with MONUC, both in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation programme and in the disengagement of forces and providing United Nations personnel necessary access to all positions.

The problem of the demilitarization of Kisangani remains acute. It must be resolved without delay, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1304 (2000).

As for the commencement of phase III of the operation, we fully share the Secretary-General's view, and we stress the necessity of a balanced approach to its planning, taking into account the numerous and complex tasks MONUC will face during the transitional period. We consider appropriate the decision to expand substantially the civilian components of MONUC, including a new civilian police unit, and to increase its logistical capabilities.

In that regard, we support the recommendation by the Secretary-General to extend the MONUC mandate until 15 June 2002. That would demonstrate the Security Council's commitment to the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to the stabilization of the situation in the subregion. At the same time, we would like to make the point that MONUC is not the main key to the settlement of the conflict. The desire and willingness of the belligerents themselves to put an end to this conflict should remain the principal factor in this regard.

As for the use of children as combatants, we stress again that this practice is inadmissible, and urgently call upon the recruiters to stop using children for this purpose and to help them reunite with their families.

To normalize the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo it is also expedient not to lose sight of the economic aspect of the problem. In this regard, we think it necessary to expedite the establishment of a Congo River Basin commission that would promote navigation on the river and thus contribute to the revitalization of trade along the country's main artery, the inland waterway system. This is also extremely important for MONUC in terms of shipping supplies to its contingents.

Against the background of the positive developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the whole region, which were specifically triggered by the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, we would like to point out to the importance of regional cooperation, especially meetings between the leaders of the countries involved in the conflict. This is especially urgent in the light of the information about the eastward movement of elements of armed groups crossing into Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania. We are deeply concerned about these latest developments.

Finally, we would like to express our support for the Security Council draft resolution that is to be adopted later this week. We believe that draft to be a serious signal to the parties in terms of preserving the window of opportunity for the settlement of the conflict and for the stabilization of the situation in the subregion.

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): I thank Under-Secretary-General Jean-Marie Guéhenno for introducing this excellent report of the Secretary-General on the United

Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). I also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara Otunnu, for his briefing on the state of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I join others in welcoming the presence here today of the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and I thank him for his most important statement.

The Secretary-General's report supports the observations we made and the conclusions we derived during our recent mission to the Great Lakes region. The Secretary-General also sets out for us a concept of operations for MONUC that my delegation believes to be appropriate to meet the challenges we face in the Lusaka peace process. It is forward-looking in its scope, and it sets the stage for a transition from MONUC's phase II deployment to its phase III deployment.

It is the view of my delegation that the Secretary-General has told the Security Council what it needs to know in order for us to make appropriate decisions to move forward in facilitating the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular, and in the Great Lakes region as a whole. The Security Council is fully apprised of its responsibilities. It is important that the parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement fully understand theirs.

There should be no doubt concerning the commitment of the Security Council and the international community to the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Security Council further demonstrated its commitment to peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in sending its mission to the Great Lakes region, and in the course of the next few days it will extend the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for one year, which will allow for longer-term planning by the Secretary-General.

While on the Security Council mission, the members of the Council, united in their objectives, emphasized to all the parties what is expected of each individually and all collectively. That is, their commitments to Lusaka and subsequent related agreements must be unconditional.

It behoves us to remain focused on the way forward. It is important that the parties understand

clearly their obligations to take appropriate action to carry out the commitments they have made to effectively implement the terms of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. My delegation understands fully that while there are a number of important positive developments, there remain a number of troubling, unresolved issues. It is important that progress be made in resolving these without delay, so that the movement towards peace can be maintained.

I will highlight a few issues that we consider to be of considerable importance in the peace process. The Security Council — in its resolutions, in its discussions with the Political Committee and in its discussions with each party to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement — has repeatedly emphasized the importance of the national political dialogue for the success of the peace process. The facilitator of the dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire has announced the start of a preparatory meeting on 16 July. I take this opportunity to once again challenge all parties to rise to the occasion and take full advantage of this opportunity to build a lasting peace in the Congo. At the same time, I also urge President Kabila to engage his counterparts — his neighbours in Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda — in meaningful discussions to resolve the security concerns of all States in the region, and I call on his neighbours to reciprocate. Beyond a doubt a security threat to any one of these countries is a threat to peace for all of them. I commend those leaders in southern Africa who are encouraging and facilitating dialogue between and among the leaders of the region. I reiterate the importance of each party acting in a positive manner and taking appropriate steps to advance the peace process.

This includes, first, ceasing all hostile activities against each other, which means refraining from belligerency in words as well as deeds, including refraining from making false accusations against each other.

Secondly, there must be an end to all support for groups within the Congo by outside forces. Countries in the region that continue to provide such support will have to answer to the international community for obstructing the peace and perpetuating the suffering of the Congolese people.

Thirdly, the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation and reintegration of all armed groups within the Congo must proceed effectively and without

delay. There must be an immediate cessation of support for the negative forces, in particular, the former members of the Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR) and the Interahamwe, and the disarmament and demobilization of these forces must be verified by MONUC.

Fourthly, human rights and humanitarian law must be respected, and the protection of civilian populations — both those under the control of armed groups and those in areas evacuated pursuant to the disengagement and withdrawal plans — must be guaranteed. The Secretary-General's report draws attention to the gross violations that are taking place in areas under the control of all armed forces in the Congo, including areas under the control of Government forces. No amount of denial can disguise these facts. In this regard, it should be understood by all perpetrators that the international community will not ignore atrocities carried out against the civilian population. There will be no impunity.

Fifthly, an immediate end must be brought to the recruitment and retention of child soldiers. Child combatants must be demobilized and reintegrated into society without further delay, and such action, to be credible, must be verifiable by MONUC. I urge the international community to provide the necessary resources to carry out an effective disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement programme for child soldiers and all armed groups in the Congo.

I must direct a few comments to the Mouvement pour la libération du Congo (MLC) and Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma (RCD-Goma). These groups must act in accord with the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and with the disengagement plans, and must abide by Security Council resolutions. The MLC must adhere to the disengagement plan and withdraw its forces to the designated lines in Equateur Province without further delay. The RCD must comply with resolution 1304 (2000) and remove its forces from Kisangani. The RCD must understand that cooperation with MONUC and the demilitarization of Kisangani are integral to the peace process, and must understand the implications of failing to comply.

My delegation objects to the position taken by the RCD with respect to the MONUC fuel convoy on its

way to Kisangani. We urge it to reverse its position and cooperate fully with MONUC, unconditionally.

The international community's patience is not inexhaustible. The MLC and RCD, as well as their supporters, would be well advised to realize that such intransigence on their part cannot be tolerated indefinitely by the international community. At the same time, others should not construe these words directed at the MLC, the RCD and their supporters to mean that any party has a lesser obligation to fully cooperate with the peace process and with MONUC.

The Secretary-General has highlighted in his report the dire humanitarian situation of the Congolese people. The problems faced by women and children are of particular severity and require our immediate attention. Jamaica fully supports the strengthening of MONUC to deal with the humanitarian conditions inflicted on the children by the war. We look forward to working with the Special Representative on the plan of action for war-affected children. I urge the international community to look favourably on supporting humanitarian agencies that seek to bring relief to the people of the Congo.

As we move forward on this tenuous path to peace, it is important that we construct a peace that will last. In order to do so, we cannot wait until all the guns are silenced, all the belligerents are disarmed or all foreign forces have completely withdrawn from the Congo. A political solution will not take hold unless the political dialogue, the disarmament and the withdrawal of foreign forces are accompanied and supported by peace-building measures, including economic sustenance and sustainable development. There can be no pause between peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building. For peace to be sustained, these processes must overlap, be integrated and be pursued simultaneously.

For this reason, it is imperative that the international community — in particular the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other international and regional financial and developmental institutions — become fully engaged in the peace process at this critical juncture.

In conclusion, allow me to pay tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Morjane, for his exemplary leadership of MONUC, and to the men and women of MONUC, both civilian and military, for the extraordinary efforts they are making

under extremely difficult circumstances in the cause of peace.

I also pay tribute to the countries that have contributed troops and other personnel in the service of MONUC and the United Nations, without which the hope for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo would be but a fleeting illusion.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes and thanks Mr. Okitundu, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for his statement on the current situation in his country.

We would like also to thank the Secretary-General for his eighth report on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and to express our gratitude for the very important presentation made by Mr. Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

We would like also to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Otunnu, for his briefing, which was very moving. Hearing of the plight of the children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo gives us a sense of urgency to make greater efforts to put an end to the current conflict.

The report of the Secretary-General presents a comprehensive and realistic analysis of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and contains very sound proposals. We agree with his assessment of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we support his ideas regarding the next phase of the deployment of MONUC.

We believe that, following the visit of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, the report of the Secretary-General, the relevant Council resolutions and the activities of MONUC will further promote the development of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

At present, the armed forces of the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have basically completed the disengagement process; the ceasefire has held; the cooperation of the parties with MONUC has improved; and preparations for the inter-Congolese political dialogue are under way. At the same time, there is an increase in bilateral and

multilateral contacts at various levels among countries in the Great Lakes region.

This positive momentum in developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has shown the international community that a window of opportunity exists and has increased its confidence in the peace process, but we must also note that there is still a long way to go before a genuine peace is realized.

The situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region as a whole remains fraught with difficulties and risks. The peace efforts made by the parties to the conflict still fall far short of the expectations of the international community. Recently, some armed groups, with the support of certain parties, have continued to engage in acts of violence. The Front de libération du Congo (FLC) has not completed disengagement, and we are still waiting for the Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie (RCD-Goma) to take corrective actions to achieve the demilitarization of Kisangani. Furthermore, the parties concerned still have not provided to the Joint Military Commission and MONUC detailed information on their armed forces and armed groups.

The reopening of the Congo river system, as Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno said, is of central importance. However, difficulties and obstacles remain.

We also find the attitude of the RCD, as described by Mr. Guéhenno, very disturbing. We call on the RCD fully to cooperate with MONUC.

The draft resolution to be adopted by the Security Council contains explicit stipulations as to the responsibility of various parties in the next phase of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The key issue remains whether the parties concerned have the political will to resolve the conflict by peaceful means as soon as possible, and whether they want to translate such will into practical action.

Recently many countries have called on the international community and the United Nations in particular to devote the necessary attention to Africa. Africa should not become a neglected continent. It is encouraging that the United Nations and the Security Council are devoting considerable attention to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region as a whole.

On the other hand, ultimately the fate of the Democratic Republic of the Congo lies in the hands of the people of that country — the Government, political parties, armed groups and civil society. The fate of the countries in the Great Lakes region, in the same vein, also lies in the hands of the peoples of those countries.

We therefore call on the parties to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Great Lakes region to preserve the hard-won momentum for peace and to take practical actions to cooperate with the United Nations in a common effort to promote the peace process. This includes implementation of the commitments they undertook during Mr. Otunnu's visit on the question of child soldiers.

Indeed, peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is in the interest of the parties concerned, of the people of that country and of the Great Lakes region as a whole.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): I am grateful for your indulgence, Mr. President, and I apologize to you and to members of the Council for being late for the meeting and for darting in and out. But it is in a good cause, because the work of the Security Council is under scrutiny next door in the Trusteeship Council. You started the session off yourself, Mr. President, and I think it would be wise if members of the Council were represented there. Ambassador Valdivieso is bravely holding the fort against a number of predictable comments on the work of the Council.

But it is quite a constructive discussion, and may I say also that it is a very interactive discussion, which is perhaps a lesson also for the Council in its open meetings.

It is very good to see Foreign Minister Okitundu with us today, and I particularly appreciate it that he has taken the trouble to join us as we continue to consider this extremely important topic of trying to find peace in his country.

My delegation, too, is very grateful for the briefings which Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Special Representative Otunnu gave us this morning.

Sweden will make a statement on behalf of the European Union which will encompass United Kingdom policy here. I want to make just three or four specific comments about where we are now.

I think that we are all agreed, having been on the mission last month, that the primary responsibility for finding peace in the Great Lakes region rests with the leaders of those countries themselves. The Security Council will play a determined role, but it has to play an ancillary role in this whole process.

We very much welcome the progress that has been made in recent months, but much, much more is needed. I am sure that all interventions during the course of today's meeting will make this point very strongly. The role of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) can only be developed behind the progress which the parties make.

I echo those particularly who have focused on the Front de libération du Congo and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie this morning, as I have heard the two previous speakers do. I think that the news in that direction is poor. MONUC is trying to correct the situation, but they are not following the timetable. More than that, they have not got the message that, if they wish, as factions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to play a role in the future political life of that troubled country, they will not be able to do so without international support and they will not get international support unless they are wholeheartedly behind the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. The points which Ambassador Ward and others have made in that respect are extremely important.

The parties now need to produce information and serious plans for the withdrawal of forces and for moving forward in disarmament and demobilization. We very much welcome the whole range of the Secretary-General's report on these issues and particularly his proposal for an integrated civilian-military planning section to coordinate support for the disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration process. The more we think about it, the more it is vital that this process get going now and that it encompass the forces that are still roaming round and doing damage in the eastern part of the Congo. Otherwise, failure in that respect will unravel the other parts of the reciprocal agreements that have been entered into under the Lusaka Agreement. We have not had a response that is satisfactory from all members of the Political Committee in this respect and it must be chased up.

We need also to be conscious of the links with the conflict in Burundi, including, again, in planning for disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, reintegration and repatriation, and I am sure we will all be making that point this morning.

We are very pleased that Sir Ketumile Masire is making progress now on the inter-Congolese dialogue. We have to recognize that the interplay between the dialogue and the peace implementation process is going to be a vital one. We have to recognize also the interplay between the political process and the opportunities for economic regeneration. It is vital for the Congo that both these *volets* be taken forward as quickly as possible.

The humanitarian situation is still dire and we have to recognize that progress in military withdrawal and in disengagement opens up a wider set of challenges in terms of both political and civilian administration in the Congo and in terms of humanitarian relief. It is right to look for a wider role for MONUC in that respect. We look forward to receiving more detailed plans from the Secretariat across this whole range, but we will look very carefully at precisely what is being proposed. We would like to see details and costings. The potential for further action in the range of activity described in the Secretary-General's report is very wide and the Council will have to make some very careful judgements between what is needed and what is affordable in that respect. Again, this is very much related to progress being made by the parties.

We warmly thank Special Representative Otunnu for his report to us this morning. We welcome the measures he has proposed to put an end to the use of child soldiers and we welcome the fact that the parties have accepted these proposals. That is good progress and we are very pleased that he has been able to make this visit. We would like the Council to be involved in monitoring the implementation of what he is proposing, but we give him our warm support. As he said, there is also a wider need to ensure that children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo have a real alternative — the alternative of a normal life. It is right that this should be addressed within the inter-Congolese dialogue, as well as by the action of the United Nations.

I, too, pay a warm tribute to what Special Representative Morjane has achieved in his tenure in

the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to what all the members of MONUC and the forces involved in the Congo are achieving at this moment.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We consider the presence at today's Security Council meeting of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. She Okitundu, and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara Otunnu, to be very important and useful.

The Russian delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for his thorough report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for its introduction by Mr. Guéhenno. We share the cautious optimism with which the report assesses developments in that country. It is important that there be a general observance of the ceasefire. There has been incontrovertible progress in the disengagement of forces in the conflict. Part of the Ugandan and Zimbabwean contingents are leaving the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Preparations are well under way for the establishment of the inter-Congolese dialogue.

At the same time, we would feel it to be premature to speak of the irreversibility of the peace process. A great deal remains to be done to that end, in particular by the parties to the conflict, which bear the main responsibility for its settlement. On that basis, we support the recommendation in the Secretary-General's report to extend the present mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for 12 months, until 15 June 2002, while maintaining the current level of the maximum agreed strength of the Mission's military component. This would allow adequate preparation for the onset of phase III of the peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In our view, important steps in that direction should include the completion of the process of the disengagement of the parties to the conflict and the demilitarization of Kisangani, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1304 (2000). It is also essential to accelerate the work of the Political Committee of participants in the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement and of the Joint Military Commission on the preparation of detailed plans for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the members of armed groups and for

the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In our view, the logic behind the development of the peace process requires the intensification of the dialogue between the States involved in the conflict, first and foremost through bilateral contacts between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its neighbours. This is precisely where we see a window of opportunity to resolve many key issues of the settlement, notably those related to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the so-called negative forces.

It is essential to prevent the infiltration of armed groups from the Democratic Republic of the Congo into the territories of neighbouring States, which would only broaden the conflict. In that context, I must note our great concern over the involvement of the Front de libération du Congo in the recent fighting in the Central African Republic. We feel that this emerging trend calls for the closest attention and we would be grateful to the Secretary-General for specific recommendations on how to counter it.

The efforts of the parties to the conflict towards reconciliation will be met with support from the United Nations and its Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We welcome the Secretary-General's intention at this early stage to step up the Mission's activity in the civilian, political, human rights, humanitarian and socio-economic spheres. Efforts aimed at the economic recovery of the Democratic Republic of the Congo should be a basic component of the general strategy for the settlement of the conflict.

In that context, I should like especially to note the importance of the project to reopen river navigation between regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo that are under the control of the conflicting parties, the significance of which for the overall settlement cannot be overemphasized. A useful role in planning future tasks will have to be played by the civilian police contingent, which has now appeared for the first time in MONUC. However, it is important that all Secretariat measures to develop the mission in accordance with the defined concept should clearly correspond to the mandate agreed by the Council and should be thoroughly planned and based on the necessary logistical resources.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): Thank you very much, Mr. President, for holding this important public meeting on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We thank also Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for introducing the eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). Likewise, we express our appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara Otunnu, for his briefing on the situation of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo conflict.

We extend a very warm welcome to Mr. She Okitundu, Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we thank him for his comprehensive statement.

As we all know, the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has undergone very significant changes for the better over the last few months. Not only has the ceasefire continued to hold, but the disengagement of forces on the ground has proceeded rather smoothly, except in Equateur Province, where there have been some difficulties. We are confident, however, that the commitment in this regard given by the Front de libération du Congo at the meeting of the Joint Military Commission (JMC) and the Political Committee in Lusaka last month, and reiterated personally by Mr. Bemba at the Security Council mission meeting with him in Kampala, will be fully honoured without any further delay.

We also call upon the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD) to comply fully with Security Council resolution 1304 (2000), which calls for the demilitarization of Kisangani. The RCD cannot continue to flout the Security Council resolution in this regard.

We now look forward to the total withdrawal of all foreign forces from the soil of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we welcome the plans worked out to this end by the parties at the Lusaka meeting of the Political Committee and the JMC recently. The withdrawal plans require the parties to the conflict to communicate important information on movements of their troops and other relevant information by fixed dates. The information is also vital for MONUC to plan and prepare for phase III deployment.

While we welcome the proposal of the Secretary-General that MONUC deployment in the Democratic Republic of the Congo be maintained in a state of transition to phase III until the conditions on the ground permit deployment under phase III, we believe that full phase III deployment must not be unduly delayed. In particular, we believe that the delay should not be the result of failures on the part of the parties to live up to their commitments under both the Lusaka accord and subsequent agreements for their disengagement and total withdrawal from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We also hold the view that during the transition to phase III, MONUC deployment should attain the ceiling of 5,537 set under phase II.

Now that the process of the inter-Congolese dialogue, under the leadership of Sir Ketumile Masire, is about to get under way, the Congolese armed groups must decisively give up their military options and gear up to join the political dialogue, and together with the political parties in the country and civil society help prepare the constitutional framework for democratic rule in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They must not miss out on the new opportunities to serve their country through the democratic process in the new political liberalization President Kabila has triggered in the country.

The armed groups must also cooperate fully with MONUC in the important task of bringing peace and normalcy to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Above all, the armed groups must understand that any obstructionist action on their part will not be acceptable to the Security Council and the international community generally.

During the visit of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, the leaders we met reminded us repeatedly that lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and indeed in the region, cannot be secured without disarming, demobilizing, repatriating and rehabilitating the negative forces, including the former Rwandan Armed Forces and the Interahamwe, that are responsible for much of the trouble the region has seen in recent years. This should indeed be a high priority, as also recognized under the Lusaka Agreement.

The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration must be undertaken by the parties concerned as a concerted action through dialogue

among leaders of the region. MONUC will have an important responsibility in this regard, and it must get ready as soon as possible to assume its role. We urge the international financial institutions and the donor community to contribute generously towards the DDR process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

As the conflict abates and normalcy gradually returns, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will have to engage in massive all-round reconstruction to put the economy back on the rails and to consolidate peace and democracy. This can be achieved only with large-scale support, again from the international financial institutions and the donor community. We hope that the parties that are engaged in the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have taken serious note of the resolve of the Security Council, following the report of the Panel on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, that it will act appropriately if the plundering is not swiftly brought to an end.

The humanitarian situation resulting from the conflict remains grim in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We acknowledge with gratitude the efforts of the humanitarian organizations that are involved in alleviating the sufferings of the Congolese people. We have heard Mr. Olara Otunnu, and we feel deeply distressed by the picture he has presented on the plight of children in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My delegation fully subscribes to the five-point plan that he is recommending in favour of the children of the Congo.

I wish to warmly commend MONUC, which is doing tremendous work in difficult circumstances in the Democratic Republic of the Congo under the dynamic leadership of Ambassador Morjane. We witnessed this abundantly in the Democratic Republic of the Congo during the visit of the Security Council mission.

Finally, my delegation supports the Secretary-General's recommendation that the mandate of MONUC be extended by one year.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): Let me begin with a brief word of apology and a brief word of thanks. I would like to apologize to my colleagues for not having been here earlier this morning. But like you, Mr. President, I was called to another room by a meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the

Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. And I would like to thank my Irish colleague for allowing me to speak this morning, as I have a flight to catch this afternoon.

I commend you, Sir, for convening today's meeting. We welcome Mr. Léonard She Okitundu, and I take this opportunity to thank him for his warm and generous hospitality when we were in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I also want to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, and my good friend Ambassador Olara Otunnu for their presentations.

Previous speakers have already mentioned many of the key points, and we also had an opportunity to discuss them two weeks ago in a public meeting, when we discussed the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region. Therefore, we wish merely to add three observations which we hope will be helpful for today's discussion.

The first observation we want to make is that we cannot take for granted that the window of opportunity that has been referred to several times will remain open forever; this must be stressed. Certainly, as we agreed at that earlier meeting, the Security Council mission has given further impetus to the Lusaka Agreement. A fragile peace is beginning to take root in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But the positive momentum generated by the disengagement of forces and the withdrawal of foreign forces must be maintained. The problem we have is that there are many obstacles and dangers. And — perhaps this is not surprising — we are witnessing signs of backsliding by some of the parties, particularly by the Movement for the Liberation of the Congo (MLC), and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD (Goma)).

As several speakers have noted, one key challenge we face in this process is the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or resettlement of the armed groups in the region. This is obviously a complex issue, and we probably cannot address it in great detail here, but I wanted to draw the attention of members of the Council to a report that has just been put out by the International Crisis Group, entitled "Disarmament in the Congo: Investing in Conflict Prevention". The report tries to discuss this issue at

great length. Of course, we do not agree with all the conclusions and recommendations of the report. But I recall that during the Security Council mission, many of us were sitting in the plane reading reports published by that organization to get the background on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi. I hope that members of the Council will refer to the report I have mentioned as well; it points out that this is a serious problem that the Council has to address. I hope we will address it.

Another key challenge we face at this stage concerns responsibility for the protection of civilians. I realize that this too is a very delicate issue. We have taken note of the concern expressed in paragraph 93 of the Secretary-General's report on the problem of assuring effective civilian administration, including the safety and security of the civilian population, in areas to be evacuated by foreign forces. Paragraphs 67 to 69 of the Secretary-General's report highlight the pressing challenge of ensuring the security of the Congolese population. But paragraphs 93 to 95 of the report make it equally clear that the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) cannot be expected to assume that responsibility. That function and general law and order duties remain the primary responsibility of the parties to the Lusaka Agreement.

At the same time, the tragic experiences of Rwanda and Srebrenica remind us that it is morally unacceptable for the United Nations to remain inactive in the face of massive human rights violations. By its very presence — and even though we would not wish this to be the case — MONUC will be expected to provide protection for civilian populations. Although it has neither the mandate nor the resources to protect civilians, at the very minimum MONUC can nevertheless carry out a valuable monitoring function by alerting the Council to any serious threat to the security of civilians. When that happens, the Council will be obliged to consider and devise an appropriate response. In that regard, we would like to recall the recommendations contained in the 15 December 1999 report of the Independent Inquiry into the Actions of the United Nations during the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda, the Carlsson inquiry, which stated that

“The United Nations — and in particular the Security Council and troop-contributing countries — must be prepared to act to prevent acts of genocide or gross violations of human

rights wherever they may take place. The political will to act should not be subject to different standards.” (S/1999/1257, *annex, recommendation 3*)

Our second observation is on the humanitarian aspects. Here, like all our colleagues, we were struck by the sobering figures presented in the Secretary-General's latest report and, I think, in Ambassador Otunnu's presentation this morning: more than 2 million people have been displaced, 16 million have critical food needs, 2 million are affected by AIDS, and, in some areas such as Moba and Kalemie, an estimated 75 per cent of children born during the conflict have perished or are expected to die before they reach the age of two. That random sampling of grim statistics amounts to what the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Kenzo Oshima, has called the country's “massive humanitarian deficit” (S/2001/572, *para. 62*). Clearly, further resources are required to tackle the problem.

In our view — and this is perhaps an obvious but nonetheless useful point to make here — one sure way to create a substantial “humanitarian credit” is for the parties to the Lusaka Agreement to end the fighting immediately and to fulfil all their commitments. The mortality study released by the International Rescue Committee on 8 May makes it clear that “excess” civilian deaths will continue to mount as long as all sides insist on pursuing the military option. In the meantime, we would urge the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the rebel groups to agree to the establishment of humanitarian corridors between Kinshasa and the eastern and northern provinces. We also look forward to working with Ambassador Otunnu on his five-point plan of action to address the grave situation of war-affected children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Our final observation is on Burundi. The situation in Burundi presents a conundrum for this Council. We all agree that we cannot afford to ignore this dimension of the conflict in the Great Lakes. We all also agree that failure to contain the crisis in Burundi will have repercussions for peace in the entire subregion. It will perpetuate the vicious cycle of ethnic conflagration that has plagued the region. Indeed, as the Secretary-General notes in his report,

“there can be no lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo without a comprehensive settlement of the situation in Burundi”.
(S/2001/572, para. 106)

We therefore strongly endorse and echo the Secretary-General's call to regional heads of State to urge the armed groups to refrain from violence and to enter into negotiations immediately. We did the same when we were part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo mission. The sheer complexity and intractability of the crisis in Burundi defies any easy solution. But the formidable challenge it poses requires us to continue to pay close attention to the unfolding situation. In that regard, it may be useful at some point for us to reflect on what role MONUC could usefully play in the border region with Burundi.

Let me join my colleagues in paying tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kamel Morjane, who is soldiering on despite, I gather, having fallen ill. We wish him a speedy recovery.

Mr. Hume (United States of America): First, I would like to join colleagues in welcoming the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Okidundu, to this meeting of the Council. We would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Affairs, Mr. Guéhenno, for his report to the Council.

We are also pleased to welcome the Under-Secretary-General in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Otunnu, back to the Security Council; he is a friend and an asset to every Member of the United Nations. More important, he is a friend and an asset to children in armed conflicts throughout the world. We are grateful that he undertook his mission to Central Africa, and we are grateful for his briefing this morning. I would like to echo his comments, and those of my colleagues, on the depravity of using children as soldiers in the Great Lakes conflict. We cannot separate that issue from the wider pursuit of peace in the region, and we must recognize that, even in a climate in which human rights are routinely violated, the cynical use of children to fight the wars of adults merits special opprobrium.

The overall strategy adopted by the Security Council has been to support the commitments made by the parties as expressed in the Lusaka Agreement and in subsequent statements. The United Nations

Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) is the embodiment of the Council's support. The success of our actions depends directly on the commitments made by the parties and on the performance by the parties of those commitments. They have all made promises that must be kept for peace and progress to be restored.

That overall strategy includes three inter-locking parts. First, peace in the Congo needs the democratic legitimacy that can come from the proposed national dialogue aiming at national elections. Cooperation and compromise by all concerned parties will be required in order to achieve this essential goal. We must redouble our efforts in support of the inter-Congolese dialogue, for this is the exercise that will lead to the rebuilding of the Congolese State. In our view, there can be no State without a working justice system, and there will be no justice in the Democratic Republic of the Congo without legitimate State authority.

The second inter-locking part is that peace depends on the end of the threats posed by the so-called negative forces. The United States shares the concern of the Security Council at recent reports that elements of the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-FAR)/Interahamwe, the Front pour la défense de la démocratie (FDD) and the Forces nationales de libération (FNL) are moving eastward towards Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania. Nothing could be more destabilizing than renewed incursions by these groups into their countries of origin. It is, in our view, morally indefensible to aid or to abet the movement of these forces back to Rwanda or Burundi. Beyond that, it is dangerous to the entire peace process. The only answer lies in cooperation between regional States on cessation of arming, followed by the disarming and disbanding of these groups, with individual members demobilized and repatriated or resettled.

There are United Nations Security Council prohibitions on the provision of arms to the ex-FAR/Interahamwe, resolutions that, in our view, should be strengthened. The draft resolution currently under negotiation among Council members calls on all Governments to halt the provision of arms to the FDD and the FNL. It may be that those measures alone will not bring peace to the region, but history suggests that absent those measures, the peace we desire will be even harder to attain.

Thirdly, peace requires the withdrawal of all foreign forces. We welcome the recent progress in this direction, but, frankly, it is not enough. Those parties that have not made detailed commitments to withdraw their forces need to do so now. There must be no backsliding. While this process cannot be completed without security cooperation among the State parties, each individually has a duty to make that cooperation effective.

I want to raise a point emphasized by the recent Security Council mission: the need to end impunity for violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. We all agree that impunity should no longer be acceptable in this crisis, but now we need to enter into a discussion of how we go about ending it. As in the case of our wider involvement in resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, our first response should be to turn to our partners in the peace process. We must remind all of their obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention, and we must work to ensure that those obligations are met.

As already raised by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno and Special Representative Otunnu in the most eloquent terms, the parties have obligations under the decisions of the Council and under international humanitarian law to respect civilian rights. Kisangani must be demilitarized, and the Congo River must be reopened for commerce. Most profoundly, these duties owed by the parties are owed to the Congolese people. We require that these actions be taken now.

Finally, we all recognize the extraordinary performance of the United Nations Mission in the Congo. With limited resources to cover a vast and undeveloped country, MONUC has done a superb job. We believe the Secretary-General has given us an excellent report that balances the need for United Nations action with the need for action on the part of the Lusaka signatories. The Secretary-General's recommendations keep MONUC within achievable tasks and set realistic benchmarks for future commitments. We are pleased to support the report and the current draft resolution.

Mr. Cooney (Ireland): I would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for introducing the Secretary-General's latest report, which outlines proposals for the transition to phase III of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). I would also like to

thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Otunnu, who is of course no stranger to this table, for his report. Ireland shares his many concerns and welcomes reported progress on the demobilization of child soldiers — although, of course, much, more needs to be done. I would also like to recognize the constructive and forward-looking intervention of Foreign Minister She Okitundu, and to thank him for the warm welcome that was extended to the Security Council delegation during our recent visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Of course, like others, I would also like to pay tribute to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kamel Morjane, and to the men and women of MONUC for their untiring work on behalf of the international community.

Sweden will later speak on behalf of the European Union. Ireland fully associates itself with that intervention.

The Security Council mission returned from the Great Lakes region reasonably optimistic about the prospects for a resolution of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Since then there have been some positive developments, but there have also been disappointments. The onus is now on the signatories to the Lusaka Agreement to honour their commitments under the Agreement and to resist the temptation to use the ceasefire and the redeployment of forces to seek advantage over their fellow signatories. All sides must accept that the conflict is over and that the future lies in cooperation and the mutual and progressive implementation of the Lusaka accord.

In its various resolutions and statements, and in its various meetings with the parties, the Security Council has always striven to demonstrate a sense of balance and proportion in its demands. Ireland believes that this has been acknowledged and welcomed by the parties and that it has allowed the Council to make a real contribution to the modest progress that has been achieved to date.

It is in that spirit that we express our concern at the reported incidents of non-cooperation by the Mouvement pour la libération du Congo (MLC) and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD). We call on the MLC to complete the programme of redeployment of its forces in sector one, and on the RCD-Goma to comply with the Council's demand that it withdraw its troops from Kisangani. We urge all

foreign Governments to implement their commitments under the Lusaka Agreement to withdraw their forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. And we call for all parties, in particular the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zimbabwe, to refuse all support to the so-called negative forces, as well as to Mayi-Mayi groups violating the ceasefire.

The exploitation of the resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by foreign Governments, which is a result of the conflict, must end with immediate effect.

Turning to the proposal of the Secretary-General, we regret that only Angola and Uganda have so far provided MONUC with information on the numbers, dispositions and armaments of forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in respect to the withdrawal of foreign forces and disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement. We reluctantly concur with the Secretary-General that as a result there is not presently sufficient basis for further action by the United Nations in sustaining and supporting the initiatives taken by the parties in these areas.

However, we also agree with the Secretary-General that preparations for phase III of MONUC's operations, as envisaged in the Secretary-General's seventh report, should proceed. We feel that particular effort should be made to address the situation in the Kivus, as resolution of the conflict or conflicts there is central to ending violence in the wider region. We particularly welcome the proposal to deploy a civilian component to advise and assist the local authorities in discharging their duty to ensure the security of the population. We welcome too the intention to attach to MONUC specialists in human rights, humanitarian assistance, child protection and gender-awareness, and we hope that they will be able to provide support to the local authorities in developing their own capacity.

We support, too, the emphasis placed on the gender perspective and stress that the particular impact of the conflict on women and girls should be factored into all aspects of MONUC's work. We particularly support the appointment of a Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General who is to be charged with coordination within MONUC and between MONUC and other United Nations agencies and donors.

As regards the dire humanitarian situation of the Congolese people, which is highlighted by the Secretary-General, we support the call for the establishment of humanitarian corridors to allow resumption of trade in food and other goods between Kinshasa and eastern and northern provinces. We call on the Government and the rebel groups to work together to this end.

We note that it is envisaged that the role of MONUC in the transitional phase will be limited to monitoring developments and reporting on them to the Council. We fully agree that the parties to the conflict bear the primary responsibility for the safety of the civilian population. We also recognize the practical limitations placed on the United Nations, not least because of the geographical and logistical difficulties of the operation. Nevertheless, like my Singaporean colleague, I would point out that the mere presence of the United Nations on the ground will create a sense of expectation to which we must be ready to respond as developments unfold.

I would like to conclude on a positive note by urging that all Congolese parties work closely with the facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire, and his team to bring about early progress in the establishment of viable democratic government in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The success of the inter-Congolese dialogue is essential to the long-term peace and stability of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the wider region.

During the Council's visit to Kinshasa, a friend of the Congo described the country — blessed as it is by its great natural and human resources — as a safe to which the key had been lost. The inter-Congolese dialogue gives the Congolese people the opportunity to refashion that key and thereby unblock their enormous potential and put it to use to the benefit of the entire Congolese people.

Mr. Tekaya (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for introducing the eighth report of the Secretary-General. I would also like to thank Mr. Olara Otunnu for his presentation on his recent visit to the Congo. My delegation hopes that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kamel Morjane, will soon be well.

My delegation would also like to welcome the presence here of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His participation in this meeting bears further witness to the interest his Government attaches to the role of the Security Council in seeking peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region. Once again, I would like to thank him for all the cooperation he personally and his Government provided the Security Council mission.

The momentum for peace persists in the region, but it is fragile. It is worth doing all we can to make it irreversible. Here the main responsibility lies with the parties. They must work in conformity with the resolutions of the Security Council, abide by the commitments they have entered into and avoid any backsliding — which would be damaging to the entire region.

We are gratified by the many diplomatic activities under way in the region, as well as by the summit meetings that have been held or are planned. We encourage all bilateral and multilateral initiatives for dialogue among the States of the subregion. Such dialogue will allow for the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement to be accelerated.

Whereas the cooperation of the Congolese authorities with MONUC is satisfactory, MONUC continues — as the Secretary-General's report states — to be frustrated by a lack of cooperation on the part of the *Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie* and the *Front de libération du Congo*. During its visit the mission of the Security Council conveyed a clear message, reminding these parties of the commitments that they had undertaken. The Council should reiterate this message.

The humanitarian situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remains worrisome, and there are pressing needs. Significant efforts are being made by humanitarian organizations in cooperation with MONUC. These efforts deserve our full support.

Mr. Olara Otunnu has just described the challenges inherent in this situation in which children are being recruited to fight in the Democratic Republic of the Congo conflict. We are grateful for the efforts he made during his visit and for his recommendations for assisting war-affected children. We also appreciate all the initiatives being taken by humanitarian actors in order to protect children.

The economic revival of the Congo is one of the important elements that must accompany the return to peace. The Council mission gave particular attention to this. We note with satisfaction the will of donor countries and of the Bretton Woods institutions to support the efforts and sacrifices of the Congolese Government at this crucial stage. The re-opening of the road and river networks with the assistance of MONUC and the carrying out of the small local projects that have been identified will make the dividends of peace tangible to the people.

The recommendations formulated by the Secretary-General in his report are realistic, and we support them. The transition stage during phase III, as recommended by the Secretary-General, seems appropriate to us. In this regard it is worth reminding the delinquent parties that they need to provide all the required detailed information regarding the withdrawal of foreign troops and disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement. This information is essential if the United Nations is to play its role.

The need to enlarge MONUC's civilian component, including deploying a civilian police unit, has become obvious with the evolution of the peace process. In addition, the demilitarization of Kisangani, demanded by the Security Council in resolution 1304 (2000), and the increasing presence of MONUC in this city, as described by the Secretary-General, reflect the importance of the role that Kisangani could play in the economic and political life of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As Mr. Guéhenno has told us, Kisangani has a symbolic value.

We agree that while extending the mandate of MONUC, the Security Council must remain vigilant, regularly reassessing the evolution of the situation and the parties' compliance with their commitments. Preparations for the next phase must be accompanied by renewed political will on the part of the parties. The Security Council has worked since last year in partnership with the Political Committee of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. This partnership should be enhanced during the next phase which will, undoubtedly, be decisive.

I would like in conclusion to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, to his Special Representative Mr. Kamel Morjane, to the Force Commander of MONUC and to all the staff of the Mission for the considerable

efforts that they continue to make to in support of peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The President: In view of the lateness of the hour, and with the concurrence of the Council, I believe it will be appropriate for us to suspend here. We have a number of speakers, including the Council

members Norway, Mali, Colombia, and Bangladesh, in my national capacity, and also Sweden, Namibia, Egypt, Japan, Burundi and Rwanda. We will suspend the meeting now and reconvene at 3 p.m.

The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m.