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Peace consolidation in West Africa

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held five meetings on peace consolidation in West Africa and issued one presidential statement concerning the situation in Guinea. The Council heard four briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), who presented the reports of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office.¹ Issues discussed focused on the challenges facing the subregion, including security sector reform, economic issues, electoral assistance, human rights violations, drug trafficking and governance, as well as the role of UNOWA in addressing these issues.

A table lists the meetings held in consideration of this item, as well as related information, including invitees and speakers.

January 2010 to July 2011: Briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General

On 12 January 2010, the Security Council received a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the latest developments in West Africa and the work of UNOWA. He noted that while there had been improvements in West Africa

¹ For more information on the mandate of UNOWA, see part X, sect. II, with regard to political and peacebuilding missions.

in the areas of conflict prevention, recovery and peacebuilding, a number of challenges still remained, such as election-related instability, economic issues, natural disasters, security sector reform, drug trafficking and organized crime. In addressing these challenges, he noted that UNOWA had established close cooperation with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union to establish peace and security in the subregion. Referring to the situation in Guinea, he cautioned that the crisis in Guinea could spill over to the subregion if left unaddressed.²

On 13 July 2010, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNOWA in his briefing, underlined the gradual progress that had been made in terms of regional stability relating to crisis prevention and peacebuilding amidst daunting difficulties and persistent challenges. He highlighted as examples the peaceful conduct of national elections in Togo, as well as the continued commitment of the authorities of Niger to the transition programme scheduled to end in March 2011. He elaborated on efforts in addressing the crisis in Guinea and noted that the first round of presidential elections was organized peacefully on 27 June 2010. On the role of women in consolidating peace and stability in the subregion, he highlighted UNOWA's efforts in engaging women's associations and leaders in Guinea in support of the transition process.³

On 17 December 2010, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNOWA, reporting to the Council, noted that the acute food crisis in Niger had been efficiently curbed due to efforts by the Government of Niger and the international community. He added that in Mauritania the Government had also initiated a process of political dialogue with the opposition and commended the Guinean people on the election of a new legitimate President. He emphasized the commitment of UNOWA to continue to engage in supporting democratic transition in the subregion. Finally he maintained that

² [S/PV.6256](#), pp. 2-3.

³ [S/PV.6358](#), pp. 2-3.

UNOWA would continue to promote synergies within United Nations entities in the subregion with a view to enhancing the contribution of the United Nations to peace and development.⁴

On 8 July 2011, the Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNOWA, who welcomed outcome of the Guinean crisis, the peaceful end of the post-election crisis in Côte d'Ivoire and the restoration of the constitutional order in Niger. He noted that the invitation extended to the democratically elected leaders of Côte d'Ivoire, Niger and Guinea to the Group of Eight summit in Deauville and the political and financial decisions taken at that time was a strong signal of support from the international community. He, however, stressed that the region still required assistance in dealing with an array of challenges, including chronic food insecurity in Niger and new institutional reforms under way in Guinea. Referring to the crisis in Libya, he expressed concern about the impact of thousands of migrants from Libya returning to Mali and Niger which had resulted in a significant increase in arms and explosives circulating in those countries. In addition, he warned that elections scheduled until 2013 in West Africa had the potential to ignite political tensions that could lead to renewed violence and instability, and that the region's progress could derail unless drug trafficking, organized crime and terrorism were effectively countered. In that context, he stressed that the Council must remain vigilant and work to prevent conflicts in the subregion.⁵

February 2010: Presidential statement on the situation in Guinea

On 16 February 2010, the Council issued a presidential statement, by which it *inter alia* welcomed the recent positive developments in Guinea, as well as the appointment of a Prime Minister and designation of a unity Government, while remaining

⁴ [S/PV.6455](#), pp. 2-3.

⁵ [S/PV.6577](#), pp. 2-4.

concerned by the situation. The Council further welcomed the Joint Declaration of Ouagadougou dated 15 January 2010, which provided in particular for the establishment of a National Unity Government led by a civilian Prime Minister designated by the opposition, the holding of elections within six months, the commitment that the Head of State of the transition, members of the “Conseil National pour la démocratie et le développement”, the Prime Minister, members of the National Unity Government and the defense and security forces in active service would not stand in the forthcoming presidential elections. It also commended the work of the International Commission of Inquiry established to investigate the facts and circumstances of the events of 28 September 2009 in Guinea,⁶ and took positive note of the report submitted by the Commission.⁷ The Council further requested the Secretary-General to continue to update it as appropriate on the situation on the ground, the potential implications for the sub-region, the fight against impunity, the efforts of ECOWAS and the African Union, and the actions of the Secretariat of the United Nations.⁸

Meetings: peace consolidation in West Africa

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations / Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
6256 12 January 2010	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in West Africa (UNOWA) (S/2009/682)		Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNOWA	
6272 16 February 2010		Letter dated 28 October 2009 from the Secretary-General informing the Security Council of the establishment of a Commission of Inquiry on human rights violations in Guinea (S/2009/556) Letter dated 18 December 2009 from the Secretary-General		S/PRST/2010/3

⁶ [S/2009/556](#).

⁷ [S/2009/693](#).

⁸ [S/PRST/2010/3](#).

<i>Meeting and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations / Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
		transmitting the final report of the Commission of Inquiry (S/2009/693 , annex)		
6358 13 July 2010	Report of the Secretary-General on UNOWA (S/2010/324)		Special Representative of the Secretary-General	
6455 17 December 2010	Report of the Secretary-General on UNOWA (S/2010/614)		Special Representative of the Secretary-General	
6577 8 July 2011	Report of the Secretary-General on UNOWA (S/2011/388)		Special Representative of the Secretary-General	
