

step in the right direction to permit the pilot disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme to proceed in Kunduz.

The Under-Secretary-General noted that President Karzai had postponed the Constitutional Loya Jirga until the end of Ramadan, between the end of November and early December. The revised schedule, which was still within the timetable set by Bonn, had provided the Constitutional Commission with more time for finalizing the draft constitution. Five hundred delegates would participate in the Constitutional Loya Jirga, of whom 344 would be elected on a provincial basis by the district representatives of the emergency Loya Jirga of 2002, who made up the electorate that would vote for the elected Constitutional Loya Jirga delegates. The registration of that electorate had begun in all provinces. The Constitutional Loya Jirga would adopt a new constitution, which would provide the basis for national elections. He said that the legal and institutional structures necessary for the national elections were gradually being put in place, including the deployment of the voter registration teams. He reiterated that the success of the disarmament,

demobilization and reintegration process and the electoral registration exercise would be dependent upon sufficient improvement in security conditions to allow deployment of staff beyond major urban centres. "Indeed, if it were held today, the electoral process would not succeed", he warned, adding that some 60 per cent of the south and some 20 per cent of the south-east and east were at any one time not freely accessible. In this context, he welcomed the unanimous adoption by the Council of a resolution approving expansion of ISAF beyond Kabul. He stressed that, as the Bonn process entered its final stage, the Government of Afghanistan and the international community would embark upon their most challenging and far-reaching political undertakings. There were still significant obstacles standing in the way, not least the lack of security. Maintaining the forward momentum would require the determination of the Afghan people and the will of the international community. He said that the expansion of security assistance provided a critical element of this equation.¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ S/PV.4848, pp. 2-6.

27. Letter dated 31 March 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Deliberations of 21 November 2002 to 15 December 2003 (4647th, 4728th, 4805th and 4881st meetings)

At its 4647th meeting, on 21 November 2002, the Security Council heard a briefing by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs on the activities of the Political Office in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, following which, in addition to all members of the Council, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, Fiji,¹ New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

In his briefing, the Under-Secretary-General reported that there had been delays in the completion of stage II of the weapons disposal plan, which had been scheduled to be implemented by September 2002. As a result of the slowed momentum, the Under-

Secretary-General noted that the entire peace process had come under some strain. He explained that the reasons for the setbacks had been twofold: first, the refusal by some ex-combatants to participate in the weapons disposal process due to problems related to the disbursement of funds for reintegration and rehabilitation and the erroneous perception that ex-combatants would be paid for turning in their weapons; and secondly, the impact of a deliberate campaign of misrepresentation regarding the peace process carried out by followers of Mr. Francis Ona, the main Bougainvillian leader who had remained outside of the peace process. Despite those developments, the Under-Secretary-General expressed encouragement at the results of a meeting of the Peace Process Consultative Committee on 30 October 2002, chaired by the United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB), at which a decision had been taken by former combatants to complete stage II of the

¹ On behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum.

weapons disposal plan by 24 December 2002. At that meeting, a number of decisions had been adopted designed to make weapon containers more secure and to foster more positive attitudes to weapons containment, thereby placing the weapons collection back on track. Also, decisions had been taken to address problems related to the usage of the funds for reintegration and rehabilitation. As a follow-up to the meeting of the Peace Process Consultative Committee, the two Bougainville faction leaders had convened an extraordinary session in Arwa at the beginning of November 2002 with an extended participation that included the provincial Administration. The session had adopted a joint ex-combatants resolution that, *inter alia*, called for the political leadership to enter into dialogue with the Me'ekamui Defence Force of Mr. Francis Ona. Following those two meetings, direct contact with the military commander of Mr. Francis Ona had been initiated by the political leadership of the ex-combatants. At both meetings, UNPOB had sent out a very clear message to the ex-combatants that the credibility of the weapons disposal and, perhaps, of the entire peace process would be at stake if the deadline of 24 December was not met. The Mission had also re-emphasized that progress towards the autonomy of Bougainville depended on the completion of stage II of the weapons disposal plan and on its verification.

During the reporting period, UNPOB had held a series of meetings with civil society groups throughout the island aimed at promoting maximum community participation in the weapons disposal plan. Also, for all of the activities of UNPOB related to weapons collection, the Under-Secretary-General underlined the close and fruitful working relationship with the Peace Monitoring Group (comprising the Governments of Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Vanuatu). Regarding the Bougainville Constitutional Commission, the Under-Secretary-General reported that it had been consulting with the people of the various districts of the island ascertaining their views on what should be the content of the Bougainville Constitution. The first draft Constitution had been scheduled to be completed by 1 January 2003. It would then be considered by the Constituent Assembly which was expected to be established by February 2003. The Under-Secretary-General noted that the actual commencement of the work of the Commission would depend on the verification by UNPOB of the satisfactory completion of stage II of the weapons disposal plan. Stressing the critical tasks ahead for UNPOB in order to complete

stages II and III (final decision on the fate of the weapons) of the weapons disposal plan and noting that as both the Peace Process Consultative Committee and the Government of Papua New Guinea had requested the presence of UNPOB beyond elections, the Under-Secretary-General recommended that the Security Council favourably consider an extension of the mandate of UNPOB for a further 12 months as all parties had confirmed that the continued presence of UNPOB was essential for the successful completion of the peace process.²

Most speakers reiterated their support for the peace process, acknowledging the considerable progress that had been made in the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement since its signing on 30 August 2001, and welcomed the continued efforts of UNPOB and the Peace Monitoring Group towards that end.

A few speakers expressed concern about the delays and obstacles to the process in Bougainville, notably with regard to the complete implementation of the weapons disposal plan,³ while the representatives of Singapore and Ireland noted that it was important not to insist on fitting the implementation of the peace process into a too rigid time frame.⁴ Several speakers underlined the link between progress in the weapons disposal and the establishment of the autonomous Bougainville government by a legal device which made the provision on autonomy and referendum in the new part of the national Constitution conditional upon verification and certification by UNPOB that stage II of the agreed weapons disposal plan had been achieved.⁵

With regard to the recommendation of the Secretary-General, the majority of the speakers supported extending the mandate of UNPOB until the end of 2003 in order to allow it to oversee the implementation of the pending components of the Peace Agreement and thereby to contribute to the final sealing of the peace process. However, the representative of the United States opined that the delay in the implementation of stage II of the weapons disposal plan did not justify another 12-month

² S/PV.4647, pp. 2-4.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 4 (Mexico); and p. 9 (Russian Federation).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9 (Singapore); and p. 11 (Ireland).

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5 (Mauritius); p. 6 (Norway); and p. 10 (Guinea).

extension of the mandate of UNPOB. Noting that progress towards greater autonomy and a referendum could not be made until UNPOB had certified the completion of stage II of the weapons disposal plan, the representative underlined the need for a more clear and measured indication from the Secretariat of the “end-game” for weapons disposal and the exit strategy for the UNPOB mission as a whole. In that regard, he noted the preliminary view of his delegation that a six-month extension of the mandate of UNPOB would be adequate.⁶ While acknowledging the need to consider an exit strategy of UNPOB, the representatives of the United Kingdom and Cameroon cautioned against jeopardizing the success in Bougainville by a precipitate end to the contribution of the United Nations.⁷

The representative of Papua New Guinea noted that despite the delays, the proposed timetable set out in the aide-mémoire of August 2002 still stood and definite milestones outlined in that aide-mémoire ensured a proper exit by the parties.⁸

The representative of Singapore highlighted that the Bougainville “file” had for some time been a source of encouragement for the Security Council as it had demonstrated that the efforts of the Council could, and often did, produce the desired results.⁹

At its 4728th meeting, on 28 March 2003, at which, in addition to all members of the Council, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, Fiji,¹⁰ Japan, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, the Council had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the Political Office in Bougainville, dated 20 March 2003.¹¹ In his report, the Secretary-General observed, *inter alia*, that the Security Council had endorsed a final extension of UNPOB until 31 December 2003.¹² He noted that the deadline for completion of stage II of the weapons disposal plan by 24 December 2002 had not been met. An Action Plan for the Completion of Weapons Collection had been adopted by political and former combatant leaders in Buka on 17 February 2003. However, a major obstacle to the completion of the weapons disposal

plan had remained the non-involvement of Mr. Francis Ona and his Me’ekamui Defence Force, despite efforts to appeal for his commitment not to impede the implementation of the peace process. Noting that the work of the Bougainville Constitutional Commission had been progressing well, the Secretary-General, in his report, informed that an official draft had been released on 1 February 2003 for island-wide consultations. He observed that, depending on the completion of stage II of the weapons disposal plan, elections could be held at the end of 2003. As a result of a visit of the National Government on 18 and 19 February 2003, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Government and the Bougainville parties that had established a mechanism for consultation between them on all aspects of the implementation of the autonomy arrangements, including the transfer of powers, functions and resources, and the settlement of disputes. Noting that the Peace Monitoring Group would withdraw by 30 June, the Secretary-General expressed the view of UNPOB that prior to the withdrawal of the Monitoring Group it would be helpful if the parties to the Agreement reviewed the progress of the weapons disposal plan, and if necessary considered replacing the Peace Monitoring Group with an alternative arrangement to assist UNPOB to fulfil its mandate and start withdrawing by the end of 2003.

At that same meeting, the Council heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs based on the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General. In his briefing, the Assistant Secretary-General noted that the implementation of the Action Plan seemed to be proceeding well. With regard to the refusal of Mr. Francis Ona to enter into dialogue, he emphasized the importance of the continued efforts of the Government of Papua New Guinea and other actors in the field to encourage the participation of Mr. Francis Ona in the peace process.¹³

Most speakers commended the efforts of UNPOB and the Peace Monitoring Group in moving stage II of the weapons disposal plan significantly forward. Welcoming the Action Plan, many speakers urged the parties to take practical action to fulfil their commitments to the Plan. Speakers also expressed satisfaction on the progress made by the Bougainville Constitutional Commission and underlined the

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13 (United Kingdom); and p. 12 (Cameroon).

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁰ On behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum.

¹¹ S/2003/345.

¹² By an exchange of letters (see chap. V).

¹³ S/PV.4728, pp. 2-4.

importance of continued assistance after UNPOB by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the specialized agencies in the process of post-conflict rehabilitation and peace-building in Bougainville.

The representative of Germany held that contingency plans should be initiated, in cooperation with the Secretariat, if stage II of the weapons disposal plan did not reach its deadline prior to the withdrawal of the Peace Monitoring Group.¹⁴ On the other hand, the representative of the United States maintained that the time to achieve the completion of stage II was not unlimited as both the Peace Monitoring Group and UNPOB would be departing at definite times and progress towards autonomy was far too important to be further delayed.¹⁵ The representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic and the United States of America both stated that they would have liked to see a more detailed outline of the exit strategy of UNPOB in the report of the Secretary-General.¹⁶ Several speakers stressed the need to address stage III of the weapons disposal plan, when a decision would be taken on the final fate of the weapons.¹⁷

The representative of Australia stated that his Government would remain engaged in Bougainville beyond the withdrawal of the Peace Monitoring Group and focus on economic development support, service delivery and the establishment and functioning of the administration and autonomous government in Bougainville.¹⁸

At its 4805th meeting, on 6 August 2003, the Council heard a briefing by the Head of UNPOB, following which, in addition to all members of the Council, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, Fiji,¹⁹ Japan, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

In his briefing, the Head of UNPOB stated that the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement had taken some dramatic steps forward, the most significant of those being the completion of

stage II of the weapons disposal plan. Owing to the absence of a numerical criterion to determine that completion, UNPOB had decided to base the verification of the completion of stage II on an island-wide process of consultations, in which it ascertained that the people of the island were feeling a level of confidence and security that they had never felt at any time since the crisis ended. Although all weapons still held by, inter alia, former combatants and supporters of Mr. Francis Ona could not be accounted for, the people of the island did not consider that those factors should delay implementation of the Peace Agreement. On 30 July 2003, UNPOB had made the verification and certification to the National Government. The Head of UNPOB noted that when the constitutional amendments would come into effect, the holding of elections for a Bougainville autonomous government could proceed. Preparations for autonomy, focused on the drafting of the Bougainville Constitution, had been ongoing through consultations between the National Government and the Bougainville Administration. With regard to the lack of participation in the peace process of Mr. Francis Ona, the Head of the Mission noted the import of intensified efforts by all concerned, including UNPOB, to bring him on board, or at the very least to ensure he would not obstruct the process. The newly established Bougainville Transition Team (comprising Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Vanuatu), the successor to the Peace Monitoring Group, had been cooperating with UNPOB with regard to, inter alia, the checking and recording of the weapons collected. Finally, the Head of UNPOB noted that the Security Council might wish to turn its attention to ways in which it could support the people of Bougainville in consolidating and sustaining their peace in the wake of the Mission.²⁰

Most speakers encouraged the parties to direct their efforts towards setting a date for the organization of elections in Bougainville, the effective holding of those elections and the establishment of an autonomous government. Welcoming the establishment of the Bougainville Transition Team, many speakers encouraged the continued engagement to monitor commitments that had been assumed in the Action Plan and also expressed their support for the assistance of UNDP and other agencies in the post-conflict rehabilitation period.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 8 (Syrian Arab Republic); and p. 11 (United States).

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 16 (Papua New Guinea); p. 17 (New Zealand); and p. 19 (Australia).

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁹ On behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum.

²⁰ S/PV.4805, pp. 2-4.

The representative of Australia noted that the decision to deploy the Bougainville Transition Team had once again demonstrated the capacity of the South Pacific community to work together to meet challenges to peace and security in that region.²¹

While several speakers called for the involvement of Mr. Francis Ona in the peace process,²² the representative of New Zealand stressed that although his Government did support efforts towards that end, the peace process could not wait for Mr. Francis Ona or be derailed due to his absence.²³

At its 4881st meeting, on 15 December 2003, the Council heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, following which, in addition to all members of the Council, statements were made by the representatives of Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

In his briefing, the Assistant Secretary-General explained that the final Bougainville Constitution was to be adopted around May 2004 and endorsed by the National Government by August 2004, following which the Constitution would enter immediately into force and a six-month period would be needed to complete preparations for elections. On 30 November 2003, the Bougainville Revolutionary Army and the Bougainville Resistance Force had adopted a resolution which declared that the final fate of the contained weapons would be their destruction. According to the resolution, the destruction should be carried out as soon as the essential components of the peace process had been finalized, including, *inter alia*, the entry into force of the Bougainville Constitution. The Assistant Secretary-General noted that Mr. Francis Ona had continued to refuse to contain the weapons of the Me'ekamui Defence Force, and that his position on that issue might affect the pace and timing of the implementation of stage III of the weapons disposal plan. Finally, in the light of the planned withdrawal of the Bougainville Transition Team by the end of 2003

and due to the fact that the peace process would not have reached its conclusion by the end of December 2003, the Secretary-General had recommended the establishment of a United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville limited to the first six months of 2004. The Mission would be a downsized version of UNPOB and offer a continued political presence by the United Nations contributing to building confidence among the parties in the process and consolidating the peace that had to that date been achieved by the respective parties involved.²⁴

Most speakers agreed with the proposal of the Secretary-General that a continued United Nations presence in Bougainville would help to facilitate and consolidate efforts that had been made in advancing the peace process. In that regard, several speakers held that the extended United Nations presence in Bougainville should have a clear exit strategy.²⁵ The representative of Mexico stated that his Government would study the proposal of the Secretary-General to preserve a United Nations presence in Bougainville for an additional six-month period, bearing in mind the financial implications for Member States and the best way that the United Nations could continue to support the strengthening of the political process in Bougainville.²⁶

The representative of Australia referred to the future commitment of his Government which would focus on good governance and helping the parties to establish a viable and affordable autonomous administration for Bougainville. Assistance and capacity-building would also be provided within the security sector of Bougainville in close cooperation with New Zealand.²⁷

The representative of Papua New Guinea expressed appreciation with regard to the efforts of UNPOB, and noted that the faith, confidence and trust that the parties to the conflict had in the Mission was also a strong expression of confidence in the United Nations.²⁸

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 6 (Papua New Guinea); p. 8 (France); and p. 9 (Germany, United Kingdom).

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²⁴ S/PV.4881, pp. 2-4.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6 (Germany, France).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.