

Angola
22 February 2001

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): I would like first of all to thank Ambassador Richard Ryan, Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) concerning Angola, for his presentation of the report of the Monitoring Mechanism on Angola Sanctions (S/2000/1225) this afternoon. We know how seriously Ambassador Ryan has been working since he took over the chairmanship of the Committee on Angola in January this year, along with the other members of his Committee, for the early examination by the Security Council of the report and the recommendations of the Monitoring Mechanism.

In the same breath, I wish to express our thanks to the former Chairman of the Angola Committee, Ambassador Paul Heinbecker of Canada, for his very able stewardship of the Committee last year. We take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ambassador Heinbecker's predecessor, Ambassador Robert Fowler, whose vision and dedicated work laid the foundation for the important work of the Monitoring Mechanism. We are very pleased to welcome Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda, Minister for External Relations of Angola, in our midst today.

My delegation has taken careful note of the report of the Monitoring Mechanism, and we fully endorse that report as well as all the recommendations of the Monitoring Mechanism. We are confident that the recommendations will help make a further dent in the capacity of the União Nacional Para a Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA) to acquire arms and logistics paid for through illegal exploitation of Angolan diamonds in order to wage war against the Angolan people, war which over so many years has inflicted so much misery on the population of Angola, has brought about a humanitarian disaster and has retarded the development process of the country.

We have no doubt that Mr. Jonas Savimbi knows full well that he cannot achieve a military victory in Angola. The reverses he has suffered recently are clear evidence of that. The only alternative open to him if he wishes to be a serious stakeholder in the political life of Angola is to renew his commitment to the Lusaka Protocol and to participate in its implementation.

The fact that Mr. Savimbi persists in waging civil war is a clear indication that his motive is other than to serve the cause of peace and stability and the wellbeing of the Angolan people. Indeed, it seems that it is the lure of Angola's diamond resources that principally motivates him.

Mr. Savimbi and UNITA have been a bad influence elsewhere in Africa. The misery the people of Sierra Leone are enduring is also attributed to the lure of diamonds and to the

looting of the mineral and other natural resources of their country. We also know of the similar situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Furthermore, the destabilizing role of Liberia in Sierra Leone and Guinea has its motivation in taking advantage of conflict diamonds. It is reprehensible indeed that the greed of a few in Africa and elsewhere should cause so much suffering to so many people in the African continent. That cannot be allowed to continue.

The nefarious trade in conflict diamonds involves not only sellers, but buyers as well, in addition to other greedy beneficiaries who supply rebel forces with weapons paid for with blood money from the sale of conflict diamonds. It also involves many unscrupulous elements in the air and sea transport trade. The nexus includes not only private individuals and business persons but, in certain instances, even political leaders who allow their territories to be used as transit points for the movement of illegal arms and fuel to forces of senseless rebellions, all for the personal rewards they reap in the process. This is done with impunity, in violation of sanctions regimes established by the Security Council.

The Monitoring Mechanism, like the panels on Sierra Leone and on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, followed the leads and came up with very credible conclusions in that regard. We in the Security Council must go beyond the “naming and shaming” system to impose appropriate sanctions against those found guilty of complicity in sanctions-busting.

We strongly support the recommendations on setting up a global certification scheme for the diamond trade, as this would help make clear the difference between legal and illegal diamonds in that trade. We urge weapons exporting countries to further strengthen their control of arms exports in order to prevent their arms from reaching the forces of rebellion and destabilization against legitimate Governments. We also support strong action, as mentioned in the report of the Monitoring Mechanism, against aircraft, ships and persons in the transportation industry involved in busting embargoes on arms shipments. In this regard, in order that the Southern African Development Community (SADC) can assume the responsibility for surveillance in the southern African region as proposed by the earlier Panel, we call upon the international community to provide the necessary financial and technical support to SADC without further delay.

Finally, we urge the countries where UNITA elements have sanctuary, and from which they provide support for the sinister designs of UNITA, to exercise stronger control over the activities of such elements so that the use of their territories does not constitute a factor in UNITA’s perpetuation of the sterile conflict in Angola.

We warmly commend the Chairman and the members of the Monitoring Mechanism for all their work and their comprehensive report. My delegation supports France’s proposal for the establishment of a permanent monitoring mechanism for all sanctions regimes and

for sanctions-busting in particular. In the meantime, we support the extension of the Mechanism mandate for another three months.